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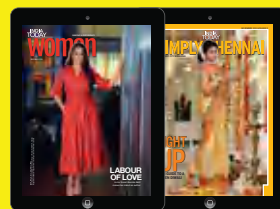


NOVEMBER 16, 2015 ₹40

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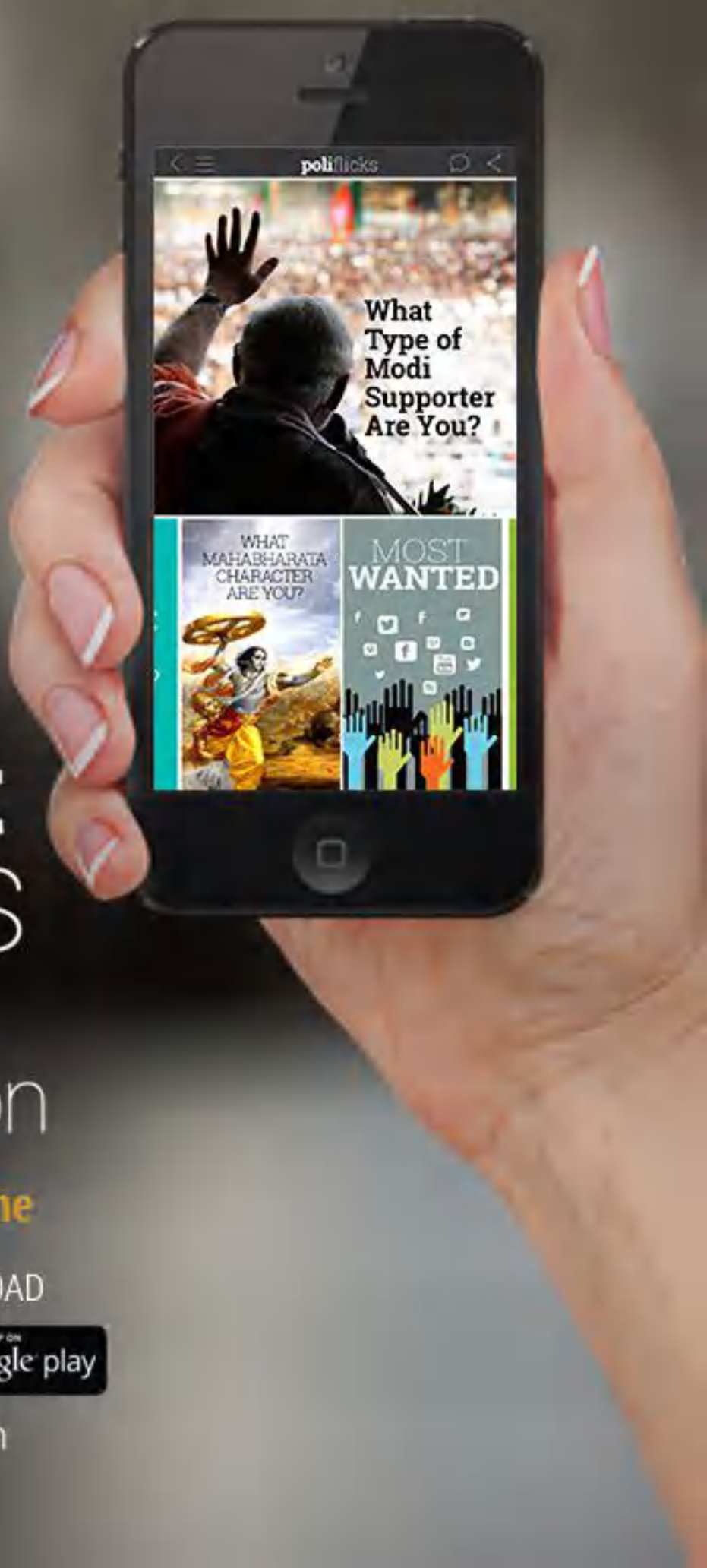
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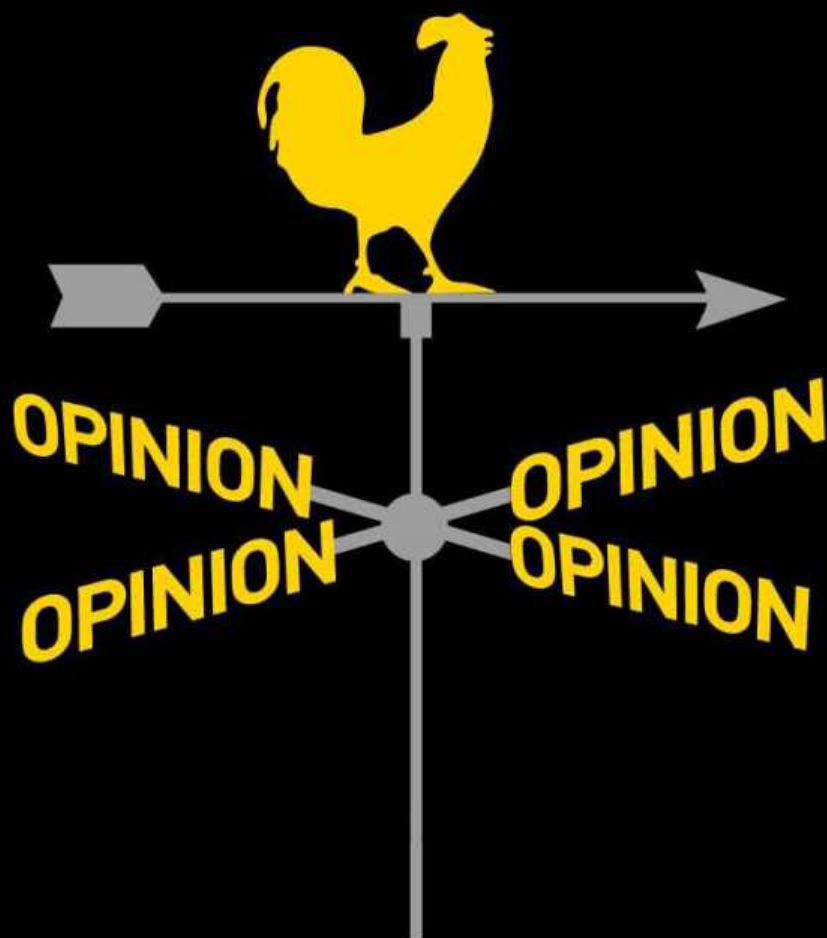
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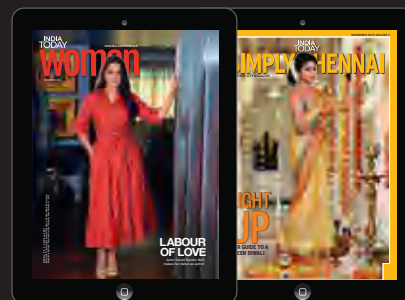
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● Impact Offices: 1201, 12th Floor, Tower 2 A, One Indiabulls Centre, (Jupiter Mills), S.B. Marg, Lower Parel (West), Mumbai-400013; Phone: 66063355;

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18-35 Milestone, Delhi Mathura Road, Faridabad-121007, (Haryana)

and at A-9, Industrial Complex, Maraimalai Nagar, District

Kancheepuram-603209, (Tamil Nadu). Published at K-9, Connaught

Circus, New Delhi-110001. Editor: Aroon Purie.

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FROM THE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

For the last 12 years, INDIA TODAY's annual State of the States (SoS) survey has emerged as the gold standard for analysing and recognising the performance of the primary units of governance that keep this country ticking over. I've been pleased to see SoS trophies displayed proudly in the offices of several chief ministers I have visited since we first began these awards in 2003. This shows that doing well in the survey has become a symbol of achievement for them, which is exactly what we'd hoped it would be.

I have been saying for a while that the future of India lies in the states. Rather than the Centre, which should look at larger policy concerns, states have a much better idea of their needs. They are also in a better position to cater to the welfare and well-being of their citizens. It's good to see that many states are pushing ahead with well-thought-out and well-implemented agendas of governance that suit specific requirements. These schemes are the building blocks for the future growth story of India.

State governments and state leaders have played a major role in Indian politics over the last 25 years. Regional parties have exercised enormous influence in Delhi by participating in coalition governments. This has changed the nature of what was once a unitary Centre to one that disperses power to state capitals. So much so that even a strong BJP-led government at the Centre came on board with the idea of greater autonomy this year by accepting the 14th Finance Commission's recommendation that 42 per cent of tax receipts should go to the states. This move, coupled with the dismantling of the Planning Commission, signals a fundamental change in our federal structure.

Our annual SoS survey is an occasion for states to compare their performance across the board with that of other states. This independent, credible and rigorous assessment of the functioning of governments, rates and ranks performance over the last year across a range of sectors such as infrastructure, health, agriculture, investment, education and macro economy. It is a scientific study like no other, in which objective data and qualitative information from highly credible government and academic sources is analysed. This data is cleaned, normalised and standardised keeping in mind that it needs to be comparable across regions. Taken together over time, the survey helps map growth trends and isolate factors that highlight similar patterns in linguistically diverse and geographically distant regions.


This year, for example, Odisha and Assam—helmed by Naveen Patnaik and Tarun Gogoi respectively for the last 15 years each—have made giant leaps. Odisha has moved to fifth from 16th, while Assam to seventh from 19th, largely due to their improvement in macro economy and infrastructure. Among the smaller states, Sikkim, ruled by Chief Minister Pawan Kumar Chamling for the last two decades, has jumped seven spots to the No. 1 spot. This success story of three long-serving Chief Ministers shows that the surest way to electoral victory is delivery on the ground.

Our cover package maps the various findings of the 2015 SoS survey to present a complete picture of how India is changing, and where the change is being effected. This year's report, put together by Nielsen's Indicus Analytics, features performance across 10 categories, including three new ones—environment, cleanliness and inclusive growth—to give us a sterling array of champions.

The SoS survey, however, is not just a forum to applaud winners. It also sounds a dire warning to the states that are lagging behind. Raking up issues such as caste and ethnic divisions may serve short-term political gains but the only true measure of success in today's India is holistic growth and economic development. That is what wins awards, and elections.



OUR MAY
2003 COVER


(Aroon Purie)



Volume XL Number 46; For the week
November 10-16, 2015, published on every Friday

● Editorial Office Living Media India Ltd., India Today Group Mediaplex,

PG-8, Sector-16A, Film City, Noida - 201301; Phone: 0120-4807100

● Subscriptions: For assistance contact Customer Care India Today Group, A-61,

Sector-57, Noida (UP)-201301; Phones: Toll-free numbers: 1800 1800 100 (from

BSNL/MTNL lines); (05120) 2479900 from Delhi and Faridabad; (0120) 2479900

from Rest of India (Monday-Friday, 10 a.m.-6 p.m.); Fax: (0120) 4078080;

Mumbai: 022-66063411/3412; Kolkata: 033-40525327; Chennai: 044-24303200;

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● Sales: Direct all trade enquiries to General Manager (Sales), Living Media India

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COVER STORY

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The success stories thrown up by the State of the States study attest to a time-tested dictum: the surest way to electoral victory is delivery on the ground.

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PUNJAB

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The Akali Dal is losing the plot in Punjab—its stand on growing extremism has become slippery, public trust is rapidly waning and the number of disgruntled senior leaders is soaring.

PROFILE

KIRAN NADAR

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Ace collector Kiran Nadar has set her eyes on F.N. Souza, and a plot of land for her third, and most expansive, museum yet.



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To offset the burden of an ageing population, China's 'one-child policy' comes to an end. But the news has brought neither relief nor excitement to the people.



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As Kathmandu hardens its stand against Madhes and New Delhi, the protests threaten Nepal's nascent democracy.

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Cover by SAURABH SINGH
Photo by SHUTTERSTOCK

Judge Thyself, My Lords

NOVEMBER 2, 2015

As the battle between the executive and the judiciary reaches epic proportions, the onus is on the judges to resolve the constitutional crisis



“That the Supreme Court is ready to hear suggestions on improving the collegium system is a big achievement for the government.”

K.R.SRINIVASAN, Secunderabad

Make Judiciary Transparent

The judiciary's criticism of the executive's involvement in the final selection of judges is not well-founded. (Judge Thyself, My Lords, November 2). The recent appointments of the CAG and chief election commissioner, among others, show that the government is capable of putting competent people at the helm of important institutions. If we wish to reform our legal system, the executive must have a say in the process.

SHUBHAM ANAND, Ahmedabad

Over 30 million cases are pending in Indian courts, some for even 20 years, and 254,000 undertrials are languishing in jails awaiting trial while celebrities such as Salman Khan get bail within hours of conviction. Judges may be appointed by any system but the judiciary should be acting in the interest of the people and run its affairs in a transparent manner. It should

Playing for the People

You would expect Virender Sehwag to do everything with a bang (Purists' Nightmare, Public's Delight, November 2). Be it scoring a six off the first ball of an inning or closing a hun-



dred with a clean four. However, he chose to announce his retirement from international cricket in a very quiet manner, through a tweet. Your story on the Nawab of Najafgarh does full justice to the talent and simplicity that defined the cricketer. He had no airs and trusted his bat to do all the talking and silence critics. Numbers aside, he will always be known to cricket fans as someone who took the sport to the masses and made it hugely entertaining.

J. AKSHAY, Bengaluru

not be reduced to a personal fiefdom of judges.

JAGDISH MITTER OVASDI, Jaipur

I feel the debate should be on how to appoint judges rather than on who gets to appoint them. Appointments to high courts and the Supreme Court should be made on the basis of an all-India test, on the lines of the one conducted by the Union Public Service Commission, so that only the best get selected.

L.S. DHARMESH, Jaipur

While the voice of the people as articulated through their elected representatives in the legislature is important, a system that selects judges in a transparent manner is vital to our constitutional scheme. The government has to make an effort to secure a consensus on what further legal action can be taken—a matter in which political egos must be suppressed in the nation's interest.

J.S. ACHARYA, Hyderabad



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JUDGE THYSELF,
MY LORDS

The court's decision is partly correct. No politician should be involved in selection of judges. However, we do need a more transparent judicial system.

Tauro

The infirmities of the collegium system must be improved, but without needless intervention of the executive and the

legislature. The quality of lawyers in India is highly questionable.

Sanjiv Gupta

Judiciary in India is one of the most corrupt in the world and least accountable to its people.

Ken

THE NEXT BIG THING

Trust is missing in India's relationship with Africa. We have always looked down upon Africans as an inferior race.

Kishore

The Supreme Court's decision to strike down the National Judicial Appointments Commission (NJAC) as unconstitutional needs to be celebrated.

While the argument on judicial overreach is still being debated, a curb on overreach should not come at the cost of the judiciary's independence.

The verdict upholds the judiciary's sanctity.

J. AKSHOBHYA, *Mysuru*

Regardless of the voices for/against the NJAC and the collegium system to appoint judges, both the systems are flawed. No individual or entity should have the power to push through nominees without due consultation. Perhaps, the solution lies in finding a middle path where both the executive and the judiciary have defined roles in the selection of judges.

PRAMOD SRIVASTAVA, *Delhi*

The debate on judicial appointments has provided a brilliant opportunity for the country to reform the present system and make it immune to influence and corruption. The government can also read the Justice Venkatachaliah Commission report of 2002 which suggested an NJAC-like body comprising the CJI and two seniormost judges of the SC to examine complaints of



Back to the Days of Emergency

Far from earning accolades, the government is in the news for all the wrong reasons and is projecting an intolerant and medieval India to the world (Why the Hardliners Are Getting Away, November 2). The recently released US congressional report on religious freedom makes a stinging comment on minorities facing "significant hate campaigns by Hindu nationalist groups and local and state politicians". The Emergency days seem to be making a comeback with the government clamping down on dissent of any kind in its bid to form a Hindu *rashttra*.

K. S. JAYATHEERTHA,
Bengaluru

The government's failure to act against the perpetrators of the Dadri lynching and M.M. Kalburgi murder have shaken the common man's faith in it. Its inability to protect the people who elected it and letting extremists have a free run to disrupt law and order mark a sad day for democracy.

M. KUMAR, *Delhi*

deviant behaviour by judges and ensuring judicial accountability.

AKSHAY VISWANATHAN,
Thiruvananthapuram

Power to Women

It was refreshing to read that more women are coming out to vote in the Bihar assembly elections (Better Harvest with a United Front, November 2). This is a sign of growing awareness among women to exercise their political franchise and have a say in the process of government formation. In the US presidential elections, women voters have enough political clout to make or mar the fortunes of parties.

HENA PRASUN, *Ahmedabad*

A Fresh Start

Your story in the backdrop of the third India-Africa Summit analysed the different aspects of India's relations with the continent (The Next Big Thing, November 2). The two share a common history of colonialism and Gandhi's fight against it, and the summit has given India the perfect opportunity to build on it and pursue its interests in investments in the resource-rich countries of Africa. India can also help Africa with technology and skilled manpower.

B. RAJASEKARAN, *Bengaluru*

Leaders Lead, Laggards Lag

History, you could argue, is the best teacher of political economy. The basic lesson political parties and leaders could imbibe from this is that getting it right does not require a postdoctorate in rocket science. Development may elude the masses but the definition of economic development is not elusive or mysterious. It is, as the textbook says, about getting the basic foundation right. Very simply, promote agriculture by en-



INVESTMENT IN AGRICULTURE IS THE KEY TO GROWTH

uring credit to farmers and developing irrigation facilities, invest in infrastructure for connectivity between fields and markets, spend on education and health to enable people to benefit from the opportunities and derive revenue from the resultant investments that will boost consumer markets.

Punjab, which has emerged as the best overall big state for the fifth year in a row, is a textbook case of economic development. Investment in irrigation and infrastructure improved yields and incomes creating a consumer market that delivers revenue. Consider the small state of Puducherry, which has used its strong agrarian economy to invest in health and infrastructure and attract investments to oust states such as Goa and Delhi to win the top slot.

by Shankkar Aiyar



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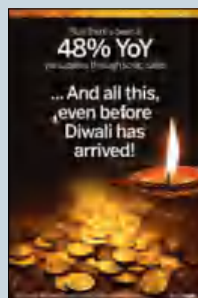
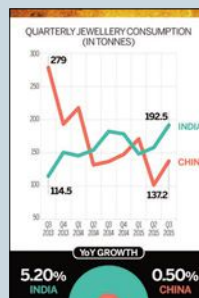
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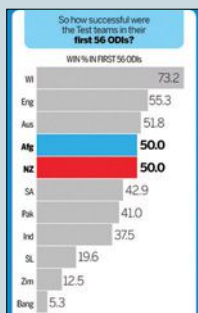
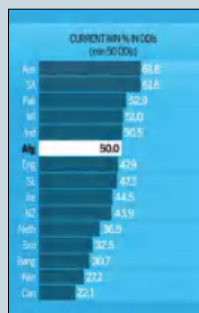
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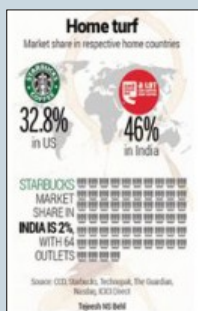
A country for gold India regains the top spot as the biggest overall consumer of gold globally in the first nine months this year. <http://bit.ly/1MEngPb>



Scripting history Putting its war-ravaged past behind, Afghanistan becomes the first associate nation to defeat a Test-playing nation, Zimbabwe. <http://bit.ly/20qjA7Q>



The cuppa war heats up As Café Coffee Day gets listed on the stock exchange, a look at how it fares against global giant Starbucks. <http://bit.ly/1KVXVsC>



MOST SHARED ON FACEBOOK

Modi, Lalu in a musical fight over Bihar elections. #SoSorry	7,508
Singapore is the world's healthiest country, India ranks 103rd	459
India's first double-decker Shatabdi to run between Mumbai and Goa	453

MOST LIKED ON FACEBOOK

Royal Enfield posts 73 per cent jump in October sales	5,541
Modi, Lalu in a musical fight over Bihar elections. #SoSorry	4,583
India's first double-decker Shatabdi to run between Mumbai and Goa	4,379

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MODI HITS THE INFORMATION HIGHWAY

Right to Information is making small inroads in the Narendra Modi government after being on the backburner for 15 months. The Prime Minister's first endorsement came during his October 16 address at the 10th RTI convention in Delhi where he emphasised transparency as a prerequisite for people to trust the system. Attendance of RTI activists was strictly regulated and their political affiliations and backgrounds checked by intelligence agencies. The PMO has put up basic information on the PM's foreign visits through its website, the subject of constant query from RTI activists. However, except the PM's first visit to Bhutan costing Rs 2.4 crore, all other bills are either 'under process' or 'yet to be received' nearly a year after the tours. The PMO has, however, judiciously displayed details of foreign visits undertaken by Manmohan Singh and A.B. Vajpayee.



Illustration by SAURABH SINGH

MODIS IN THE NEWS

PUBLIC FIGURES WITH THE COMMON SURNAME MADE WAVES THIS WEEK

Russia's ambassador to Britain accidentally tweeted a picture of actor **Kalpen Modi** (who uses the stage name Kal Penn) to depict an ISIS terrorist.



Mira Modi, an 11-year-old PIO in the US, has started her own business of selling passwords.



India's Enforcement Directorate has stepped up efforts to extradite former IPL commissioner **Lalit Modi** from Malta where he is now based.



A DAMP SQUIB

A First Ladies lunch on the sidelines of the India-Africa Forum Summit was a non-starter. Despite a show by Fashion Design Council of India and an introduction to the work of African solar engineers from Barefoot College, Tilonia, the 17 First Ladies ended up talking to each other. Several BJP ministers' wives were present but changed place cards so they could chat with each other. All this protocol mangling despite **Ruchira Kamboj**, a protocol and events expert, who is posted in Paris as India's ambassador to UNESCO, being called to oversee the event.



MISSION REVIEW

India's foreign missions are on alert after Foreign Secretary **S. Jaishankar** has reintroduced the practice of sending senior officers to carry out detailed inspections. In October-end, a team led by Ajay Gondane, additional secretary in the Ministry of External Affairs, spent three days in Beijing interviewing behind closed doors Indian officers and a range of Indian community representatives, asking for their views to evaluate the embassy's overall functioning and promising to act on their feedback.



MANI TROUBLES

Kerala Finance Minister **K.M. Mani**, 82, is to face further probe into the bar licence renewal bribery scandal on an order by the state's vigilance commission and Special Judge John K. Illikadan. The judge observed that "there are sufficient materials for making a prima facie case" against Mani while rejecting the findings of the state vigilance and anti-corruption bureau in its final case report recommending its closure. Adding to Mani's embarrassment, Lokayukta Justice Pius C. Kuriakose, on a plea that the minister is unfit to hold public office under the Lokayukta Act, directed the prime witness, a driver, to appear before it on November 9.



DOUBLE WHAMMY

Hydration is in the grip of a real-life soap opera. The city police booked **T. Sai Kiran**, son of Telangana's Commercial Taxes Minister **T. Srinivas Yadav**, for alleged wrongful confinement of state-level tennis player **Bhuvana Reddy**, and threatening her husband **Abhinav Mahender**.

Mahender alleges that he was taken to the minister's home and beaten up because his wife's parents were trying to annul their marriage and had approached Sai Kiran for help. This drama comes when Yadav's appointment is being challenged as illegal. Yadav, elected on a TDP ticket in June 2014, joined the TRS ministry in December and is yet to be re-elected post-defection.

THE WEEK
IN NUMBERS

200

characters. Twitter-style limit for public feedback about state government schemes on Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Akhilesh Yadav's website.



324

days. Time West Bengal transport minister Madan Mitra spent in custody for the Saradha scam before being released on bail on November 1.

1,000

metric tonnes. The supply of petrol promised to fuel-starved Nepal by China.

FREE FOR ALL by Saurabh Singh



THE IMAGE REVOLUTION

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister **Akhilesh Yadav** believes image-building and rebranding to be the key to winning the 2017 state assembly polls. So while the Bihar polls will be a test case for election strategists such as Nitish Kumar's Prashant Kishore, Yadav has cast his net wider. On October 31, the CM met Gerald J. Austin, former election campaign manager of Jimmy Carter, Bill Clinton and Barack Obama in Lucknow. Akhilesh hopes to rope in Austin to improve his party's image.

RAJWANT RAWAT



LORD OF THE RING

After the infighting in Assam Congress ended with Tarun Gogoi's former aide Himanta Biswa Sarma joining the BJP, dissidence is brewing in another north-eastern state—Arunachal Pradesh. Former CM Dorjee Khandu's son Prema Khandu has resigned as tourism minister from Chief Minister **Nabam Tuki's** cabinet calling the Congress government a failure. Before Prema's departure, Tuki had sacked six ministers for criticising his leadership. While Rahul Gandhi summoned Tuki to Delhi, he has made it clear to the dissidents that there will be no change of guard in the state.

THE BIHAR TOUR HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR'S MOST-KEENLY-CONTESTED POLLS

SHOW

Yellow bicycles. Nitish Kumar's JD(U) used over 10,000 of them for campaign volunteers.

Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** addressed 30 election meetings from July 25 to November 2; **Sushil Modi** addressed close to 100 poll rallies.

Amit Shah. The BJP chief's face could be seen on almost all campaign billboards.

NO SHOW

RJD chief **Lalu Prasad's** pre-poll vow to unleash 1,000 **horse carts** as campaign vehicles remained an empty threat.

L.K. Advani, M.M. Joshi and **Shatrughan Sinha** were not called for campaigning. Joshi and Advani kept mum, but Sinha tweeted his dismay.

Prashant Kishore. Nitish Kumar's campaign specialist stayed away from media glare. Just as he did with Modi last year.



TIME TO PUSH THE ENVELOPE

India and Africa have been intimately linked for centuries by ancient trade and investment links as well as close socio-economic, cultural and political ties. These date from the era of the Mughal Empire to the struggle for freedom from colonial bondage and apartheid. The links are further reinforced by the 10 per cent of Indian diaspora that lives in Africa. The journey of friendship has evolved on a path of cooperation that is multi-layered, based on principles of South-South Cooperation and solidarity. Yet, very few know of the depth of this bond.

For instance, in 2013, 16 per cent of India's total outward FDI stocks were in Africa while rising economies such as Brazil had 9 per cent and China 0.8 per cent of their FDI stocks in the continent.

Africa has also been one of the largest recipients of India's technical cooperation. Last year, the continent benefited from \$2 billion worth of India's development partnership assistance, the largest beneficiaries being Ethiopia, Senegal and the Republic of Congo. India has gone further to offer lines of credit worth \$7.4 billion with the biggest recipients being the power and engineering sectors. Africans have also benefited from 25,000 scholarships as a direct impact of the second India-Africa Summit and today the number of African students attending Indian tertiary institutions exceeds 6,000. Training and capacity-building initiatives have also reached numerous Africans spanning a range of vital areas from information technology to security.

These achievements are impressive considering Africa's collective GDP per capita has been higher than India's in the last 10 years. And this cooperation can grow further. The third India-Africa Summit, the biggest diplomatic event hosted by India in the last three decades, has demonstrated that the time is ripe to push the envelope of the India-Africa relationship further.

By 2050, the combined population of Africa and India will account for 43 per cent of the world. By playing the right cards, this pair could impact the complex geopolitical configurations and emerge as a formidable force. Doors can be opened to boost trade and scale up investments riding on common assets such as the demographic and urban dividend of both partners, the sizeable markets and the emergence of a new generation of middle-class consumers. In fact, India and Africa will be by far the repository of the youthfulness of the world by mid-century. Their firepower on assets such as their labour force or consumption growth will be colossal.

Consider the case of trade. Africa accounts for 11 per cent of India's exports and 9 per cent of its imports while

Africa's share from India's total exports has increased from 8.1 per cent to 10.9 per cent. When compared to the total trade with the rest of the world, these figures are relatively weak despite the fact that annual trade between India and Africa currently stands at \$75 billion, making India Africa's third-largest trading partner after the EU and China. Trends also suggest that the bulk of trade is concentrated in primary commodities and only in a few African countries. Expanding the trading base would have a better impact. This would also be in line with the type of commerce that Mahatma Gandhi envisioned that "will be of ideas and services, not of manufactured goods against raw materials after the fashion of western exploiters". The summit contributes to reaffirm the need for this shift.

While Africa is fast becoming a hub for Indian investments in financial sectors, software and telecommunications, it is also a huge market for India's pharmaceutical exports—last year alone, a quarter of India's total exports of this product group were shipped to Africa. Imagine the windfalls that could be made by investing in local pharmaceutical training, production and drug manufacturing. This would pave a sustainable path for Africa's health systems as well as create jobs, stimulate economic activities and increase productivity. Another area is agriculture. Given that the agricultural characteristics of both regions are similar, food security could be enhanced by replicating the Indian Green Revolution as well as strengthening collaboration in areas that range from capacity-building, innovative agricultural technologies and inputs to agro-processing.

African heads of state were eager to ask Prime Minister Narendra Modi for more of these type of engagements. But it's not all about Indian investment in Africa only. Some were surprised to learn that by now 26 per cent of the inward FDI stocks in India actually come from Africa. A share larger than Brazil, China, the Russian Federation or the US. This can be scaled up to induce further African investments in India through real economy strength rather than mere financial transactions as is the case; some of it using tax avoidance loopholes.

If a shared vision for a vibrant India and a resurgent Africa is to be achieved, both partners have to look more to each other's complementarities. The New Delhi spirit pointed in this direction.

Carlos Lopes is executive secretary of the UN Economic Commission for Africa

Illustration by SAURABH SINGH



By 2050, the combined population of India and Africa will account for 43 per cent of the world. By playing the right cards, they could emerge as a formidable force.



NEWSFLICKS SPARK

~~DO~~LLAR BILLION DAY SALE

A look at
e-commerce sales
during India's
festive season



PROFIT SEASON



35%-40%

sales of e-commerce firms happen
during October-December

\$4 BILLION

(Rs 261 billion)

expected sales this season

SALE SEASON



**\$300
MILLION +**

(Rs 20 billion)

worth of goods sold by
Flipkart during its five-day
Big Billion Day sale (Oct 13-17)



**\$100
MILLION**

(Rs 6 billion)

worth of goods sold by Snapdeal during
its Oct 12 Electronics Monday Sale

SALE SEASON



8 MILLION

orders received by Flipkart
during the five-day sale



4 MILLION

orders shipped by Snapdeal
between Oct 12 and 20

APP SEASON



Flipkart

5 MILLION
app downloads in the
week before the sale

100%
of its sales happened
through its app



Snapdeal

5 MILLION
app downloads on
October 12

70%
of Snapdeal's orders
were through mobile

Amazon



70%

of orders placed through its app
during its October 12-17 sale

SEASON OF MOBILES

Mobiles were the largest-selling
category followed by apparel

Flipkart

**\$200
MILLION**
(Rs 13 billion)

worth of mobile phones sold
during the five-day sale

Snapdeal

**\$80
MILLION**
(Rs 5 billion)

worth of mobiles sold during
its October 12 sale

IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF...



\$9 BILLION

(Rs 586 billion)

worth of goods sold by Alibaba in China
on November 11, 2014, Singles' Day sale



\$6 BILLION EACH

(Rs 391 billion)

worth of goods sold in the US
during Cyber Monday and
Black Friday sales in 2014

Source: Nomura

AGRICULTURE
**MADHYA
PRADESH**
PUDUCHERRY



INCLUSIVE
DEVELOPMENT
TELANGANA
DELHI

MACRO
ECONOMY
HARYANA
SIKKIM



INFRASTRUCTURE
ASSAM
MIZORAM



CLEANLINESS
GUJARAT
SIKKIM



INVESTMENT
GUJARAT
SIKKIM



EDUCATION
KERALA
GOA



HEALTH
J&K
MANIPUR



GOVERNANCE
KERALA
SIKKIM

BEST OF STATES

ENVIRONMENT

HARYANA
PUDUCHERRY



The success stories thrown up by the State of the States study attest to a time-tested dictum: the surest way to electoral victory is delivery on the ground, and there is no substitute for substantive development

| By Kaushik Deka |



Placing a state firmly on the development curve is rarely a walk in the park. Take Assam Chief Minister Tarun Gogoi. At the beginning of his 14-year tenure, the Congress veteran, then pushing 65 years of age, even danced with a group of World Bank officials once—earning the wrath of his wife. Wooing them for a loan, he also ordered his bureaucrats to take the officials on a joyride to Kaziranga National Park. Purists may object to Gogoi's methods, but he achieved his goal. External aid from multinational agencies ensured that Assam showed consistent superlative performance in infrastructure development. Gogoi's example, in fact, illustrates one of the major takeaways of this year's India Today Group State of the States study—the role of

OVERALL

GUJARAT
SIKKIM

leadership and the ability to walk the extra mile play the most crucial role in the performance of a state. Two eastern states, Assam and Odisha—helmed by Naveen Patnaik for the last 15 years—have made the biggest leaps in the rankings since last year. Assam has moved to seventh rank from 19th while Odisha has moved to fifth from 16th. The rise of both states has been fuelled by improvement in their infrastructure and macro economy.

Among the 10 small states, Sikkim, ruled by Chief Minister Pawan Kumar Chamling for the last two decades, emerged as the table topper from eighth rank last year. The state claimed top position in four out of 10 categories. The success stories of the three long-serving chief ministers of India also indicate that the surest way to electoral victory is delivery on the ground. It's also perhaps a reminder to electoral strategists across the country that the only political plank that has a resale value to voters is performance. The battle for ballots may occasionally be won on religious or communal platforms, but for an epic innings at the top, there is no alternative to development.

Consistency may ensure a steady growth trajectory, but change may tilt the narrative either way. The fortunes of four states—Gujarat, Haryana, Tamil Nadu and Goa, which saw a change of guard between 2014 and 2015—changed dramatically. It was not easy for Anandiben Patel to take charge of Gujarat after Narendra

Modi but the State of the States study shows that she has taken the 'Gujarat model' of development to newer heights with the state winning the best state award, the first time after 2012 that it has done so. Haryana's economy and environment seems to be in better health, despite Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar's radical views on Muslims and cows.

Tamil Nadu and Goa demonstrate the other extreme. Between September 2014 and May 2015, Chief Minister J. Jayalalithaa spent time in jail and Tamil Nadu dropped from top position last year to 20th position this year—the steepest fall from grace since the study was first launched in 2003. The fall was scripted by the state's abysmal performance in three categories—it dropped from top to 21st position in agriculture, from third to 13th in education and 11th to 17th in infrastructure. Equally shocking was the performance of Goa, which won the best small state award for two consecutive years in 2013 and 2014. As previous chief minister Manohar Parrikar, who took pride in winning awards across categories, took charge as Union defence minister, the state dropped to ninth position and won top honour in only one category.

Two other states which have showed a significant drop in rankings are Punjab and Uttarakhand. Punjab, which is going to the polls in less than two years, has dropped from second



THE HIGHS AND LOWS OF THE STATES Gujarat, Tamil Nadu and

GUJARAT returns to the **top position** for the first time after 2012. It had slid in the past two years, getting fourth position in 2013 and sixth in 2014.

KERALA has remained the most consistent performer since 2012, finding a place among the top three.

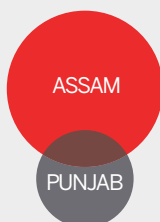
In spite of an impressive performance in inclusive development, cleanliness, investment, health and education, **GUJARAT** performs the worst in governance and ranks 20th in agriculture.

The biggest gainers among big states are **ASSAM**—jumping to seventh position from 19th—and **ODISHA**—to fifth position from 16th. Both perform well in agriculture, infrastructure, macro economy.



INFRASTRUCTURE

ASSAM HAS **834** KM OF ROADS FOR EVERY 100,000 POPULATION. THIS IS NEARLY THREE TIMES OF WHAT **PUNJAB** HAS AT **324** KM.



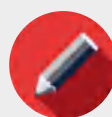
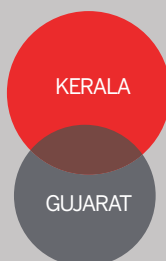
HEALTH

JAMMU & KASHMIR HAS **103** REGISTERED DOCTORS PER 100,000 POPULATION; **BIHAR** HAS JUST OVER A FOURTH OF THAT NUMBER AT JUST **34**.



GOVERNANCE

KERALA HAS **112** POLICEMEN PER 100,000 POPULATION, **GUJARAT** HAS **84**. AND CRIME'S JUST ONE ASPECT OF GOVERNANCE.



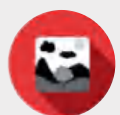
EDUCATION

KERALA GOVERNMENT SPENDS ₹ **2.25 LAKH** PER CHILD (6-23 YEARS) A YEAR ON EDUCATION. **BIHAR'S** SPENDING IS LESS THAN A FOURTH AT ₹ **53,000**.



WORST

While in some categories the divide between the table topper and the one at the bottom is wide, in others the gap is marginal, indicating a tough competition



CLEANLINESS

91% OF **GUJARAT** HOUSEHOLDS HAVE IMPROVED SANITATION FACILITY. THE FIGURE IS A MEAGRE **20%** FOR **JHARKHAND**.



ENVIRONMENT

TREE COVER IN **HARYANA** IS **3%** OF THE TOTAL AREA. ONLY **1.31%** OF **UTTARAKHAND'S** TOTAL AREA IS UNDER TREE COVER.



** Best and worst states taken on the basis of overall index numbers for 2015*

Goa saw a change of guard and fortunes since 2014. Three long-serving CMs emerge big winners.

The **biggest loser** among **big states** is **TAMIL NADU**—it drops from first spot to 20th—and performs abysmally in agriculture and infrastructure.

The **biggest gainer** among **small states** is **SIKKIM** which jumps to the top spot from eighth last year, and improves in governance, investment and macro economy.

The **biggest loser** among **small states** is **GOA** which drops from top position to ninth, to go with a drastic slip in performance in three categories.

Four winning states are ruled by the **BJP** and two by the **Congress**. Both **Congress-ruled states**—Assam and Kerala—are going to polls next year.

HOW THE STATES WERE RANKED

- 1 The states are ranked using objective data and not perception-based qualitative information.
- 2 Data used is from recognised and highly credible government and academic sources with universal coverage of all Indian states and UTs.
- 3 The data in each of the variables is first cleaned, normalised and standardised keeping in mind that they need to be comparable across time and geography.
- 4 Equal weights are assigned to each variable while aggregating the variables under each category.
- 5 This yields a category specific index for each state (whether large or small) and UT.
- 6 The final composite index is simply the equally weighted average of each of the categories which yields the final ranking.
- 7 The 10 categories and the variables used under each are:

Agriculture

- Ratio of area under cash crop to gross cropped area
- Agricultural GSDP per rural population
- Foodgrain yield
- Loan extended to agriculture per rural household
- Ratio of net irrigated area to net sown area

Education

- Literacy rate
- Proportion of 10-14-year-old children completing primary education
- Ratio of girls' enrolment to that of boys
- Pupil-teacher ratio
- Government expenditure on education per children in the age group of 6-23
- Number of colleges vis-à-vis people in the age group 15 to 23

- Number of schools vis-à-vis people in the age group 6-15 years

Governance

- Ratio of policemen vis-à-vis population
- Inverse of pending cases
- Inverse of incidence of murder to total cognisable crimes
- Inverse of incidence of kidnapping to total cognisable crimes
- Inverse of rape/molestation to total cognisable crimes
- Panchayati Devolution Index
- Index of finances of panchayats
- Ratio of e-transactions of e-services rolled out to the total population

Health

- Infant mortality ratio (IMR)
- Ratio of male IMR to female IMR
- Percentage of births assisted by trained personnel
- Percentage of households having tap water as the principal source of water
- Registered doctors per million population
- Sex ratio
- Per capita expenditure on health and family welfare by the state government

Infrastructure

- % of households with electricity
- % of habitation connected with pucca roads
- Surfaced road length per 100,000 people
- Number of airports per 100,000 people
- Length of railway lines per 100,000 people

Investment

- Ratio of FDI inflow to GDP
- Ratio of investment to GDP
- Actual Industrial Entrepreneurs

Memorandum to proposed Industrial Entrepreneurs Memorandum

Macro Economy

- Inverse of population below poverty line
- Ratio of capital expenditure to the total population
- Ratio of gross capital formation to the total population
- Ratio of industrial workers to urban population in the age group 15-59
- Inverse of Consumer Price Index
- Per capita GDP
- Per capita GDP—service sector
- Per Capita GDP—manufacturing sector

Cleanliness

- Percentage of households with improved sanitation facility
- Percentage of schools with separate toilet facility for girls
- Percentage of households using improved source of drinking water
- Percentage of households using clean fuel for cooking

Environment

- Inverse of SO₂ concentration
- Inverse of NO₂ concentration
- Inverse of RSPM concentration
- Tree cover as a percentage of geographical area

Inclusive Development

- Progress of Pradhan Mantri Jan-Dhan Yojana
- Number of rural bank branches vis-à-vis rural population
- No. of post offices vis-à-vis population
- Number of telephone connections vis-à-vis population and number of cell phone subscribers vis-à-vis population
- Number of broadband subscribers vis-à-vis population
- Number of domestic LPG consumers vis-à-vis population
- Ratio of women representatives in panchayats to female population

position to 11th while Uttarakhand slipped from fourth to bottom rank. The fall can be attributed to both states' dismal performance in infrastructure development. The contrasting fortunes of Assam, Odisha, Punjab and Uttarakhand indicate that the growth story must start with infrastructure.

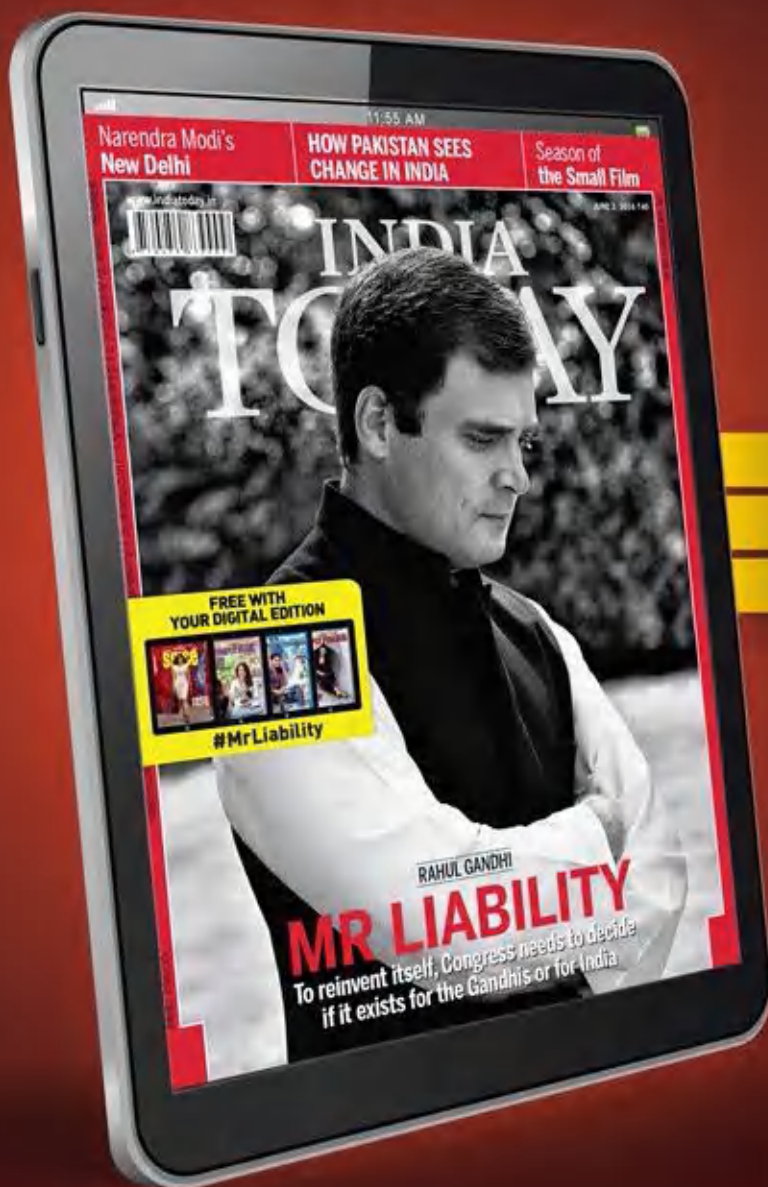
We have added three new categories to rank the states—inclusive development, environment and cleanliness—and also tweaked some of the parameters in other categories. For instance, in governance, we are not only looking at police-public ratio but have also considered the devolution of

local self-governance.

The study was conducted by economic research firm Indicus Analytics, now owned by Nielsen, and it is based on objective and authentic data sourced from government and non-government agencies.

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**OVERALL****GUJARAT**

**ANANDIBEN PATEL
GREETES PEOPLE
AT AN EVENT IN
AHMEDABAD**



**"We are
committed
to including one
and all in the
growth journey
of Gujarat."**

ANANDIBEN PATEL
Gujarat Chief Minister

BIG STATE | **GUJARAT**

GUJARAT, UNINTERRU

| By Uday Mahurkar |

When she took over as chief minister in May 2014, Anandiben Patel had a clear vision: while trying to maintain the development tempo set by her predecessor Narendra Modi, she would endeavour to improve Gujarat's Human Development Index by focusing on social parameters. Eighteen months into a job that came her way because the nation was so smitten by Modi's 'Gujarat model' of development that it voted for its pan-India replication, Patel can sit back and rest content at

filling the big shoes the Prime Minister left behind. She has largely been able to achieve the vision she had set out for Gujarat at the outset. The state continues to maintain the near-double-digit growth set by Modi's administration while notching new highs in diverse sectors.

Take micro irrigation, for instance. Under Patel, Gujarat has brought a mindboggling 3 lakh hectares under drip and sprinkler irrigation and enabled small and marginal farmers to take to it through targeted subsidies. Over 200,000 farmers have benefited as a result.

Another innovative step on the

government's part in agriculture is the new organic farming policy, Gujarat's first. The state is encouraging farmers to go green by providing powerful marketing platforms for their produce via Agriculture Produce Market Committees (APMCs) and private corporations. The extension of the sub-minor canal network of the Narmada continues at a fast clip, bringing more and more farmland under irrigation cover.

Malnutrition, hitherto one of the weak spots, is one of the Chief Minister's focus areas when it comes to health. One of Patel's first steps was to launch a new health check-up



SHAILESH RAVAL



WHY NO.1

40%

increase in government expenditure on education between 2012-13 and 2013-14.

30%

growth in FDI between 2013-14 and 2014-15, the highest in the country.

COMPOSITE

Gujarat and Kerala have been consistent performers overall, BIMARU state Uttar Pradesh desperately needs a leg-up

BIG STATE

STATE	RANK		
	2013	2014	2015
▲ GUJARAT	4	6	1
▲ KERALA	1	3	2
▲ KARNATAKA	13	9	3
▲ JAMMU & KASHMIR	20	12	4
▲ ODISHA	19	16	5
▲ MAHARASHTRA	7	14	6
▲ ASSAM	15	19	7
◆ HARYANA	5	8	8
▼ ANDHRA PRADESH	2	5	9
TELANGANA	0	0	10
▼ PUNJAB	9	2	11
▲ WEST BENGAL	14	13	12
▲ HIMACHAL PRADESH	8	15	13
▲ CHHATTISGARH	12	17	14
▼ JHARKHAND	18	10	15
▲ BIHAR	11	20	16
▼ RAJASTHAN	6	11	17
▼ MADHYA PRADESH	10	7	18
▼ UTTAR PRADESH	17	18	19
▼ TAMIL NADU	3	1	20
▼ UTTARAKHAND	16	4	21

camps on a large scale for tracking diabetes. The upshot was that 138,000 people, mostly poor or of the lower middle class, were diagnosed with diabetes and prescribed medication. “The government’s biggest achievement in the health sector is that it has precisely identified the challenged and formulated concrete steps to alleviate their condition,” says Anil Mukim, principal secretary (health and family welfare), Gujarat, who has worked with Prime Minister Modi earlier.

On October 14, Gujarat launched 16 channels as part of its educational network Vande Gujarat, delivering primary to higher education lessons and also a variety of other subjects ranging from agriculture to health—and even a channel for those taking competitive exams. The school education programmes are already being beamed through set-top boxes to 20,500 of the 34,000 government schools in the state.

It’s not just a case of Anandiben Patel unveiling new schemes. The government has furthered many programmes initiated by CM Modi. It has extended health cover under the Mukhyamantri Amrutum Yojana to the lower middle class apart from the existing beneficiaries—people falling in the Below Poverty Line category. The scheme covers free treatment of seven major diseases, including cancer.

The cattle health improvement scheme, launched by Modi when he was chief minister, has got a major boost during Patel’s tenure. Nearly 1.8 million cattle have been examined by veterinary doctors at 1,700-odd animal husbandry *melas*, and as many as 6,000 of these have been operated upon to cure ailments.

“A certain commitment to governance is certainly visible on her part,” leading economist Yogendra Alagh says of the Chief Minister.

Patel has the last word: “We are committed to including one and all in the growth journey of Gujarat. Effective last-mile delivery is our priority.”

Follow the writer on Twitter @UdayMahurkar

PTED

scheme for children aged between six months and six years which involved gauging the body mass index by measuring the arm circumference to track muscle growth and real body nutrition. As many as 4.3 million children underwent the check-up, and 100,000 of them were found to be suffering from severe acute malnutrition. Compared to pre-existing check-up parameters, the new scheme has yielded a more accurate picture of malnutrition in the state among children below six years of age and allowed the government to devise targeted schemes.

Patel has also organised health



SMALL STATE | SIKKIM

POCKET-SIZED POWER

By Soudhriti Bhabani

It was a sunny autumn afternoon when more than a hundred people gathered on MG Marg—the heart of the state capital, Gangtok. Throwing *gulaal* (coloured powder) in the air, they danced to the beats of improvised drums. The crowd was celebrating the landmark victory of the ruling Sikkim Democratic

Front (SDF) in the urban local bodies elections, held on October 9. The SDF made a clean sweep, winning all 53 seats in the state municipal election. The jubilant crowd soon went up to Mintokgang, the official residence of Chief Minister Pawan Chamling, to congratulate him, and celebrate some more.

The people that afternoon were not only celebrating an election

victory. They were also celebrating the arrival of Sikkim on the national high table of states—a journey steered by Chamling for a while now.

“The SDF came to power in Sikkim in December 1994, and from day one, all my political programmes are for the people of Sikkim—as per their demands and requirements. I have fulfilled their minimum needs and requirement for infrastructure

SOARING HIGH:
AN AERIAL VIEW OF
CAPITAL GANGTOK



“My focus now is to give the people qualitative development.”
PAWAN CHAMLING
Chief Minister, Sikkim

PRABIN KHALING

HOUSE

development. Now my focus is to give them qualitative development,” the Chief Minister tells **INDIA TODAY**.

To ensure good governance, Chamling and his team has ensured maximum focus on the health and education sectors. Sikkim is the first state to get healthcare to people's doorsteps through the government's campaign CATCH—Comprehensive Annual and Total Health Check-up for

Healthy Sikkim. As of June 2014, the drive had covered nearly the whole of the state's population. Chief Minister Chamling had launched the campaign on August 26, 2010 with an aim to make Sikkim the healthiest state in the country by 2015.

In education, the state government decided to invest 20 per cent of the total annual outlay. And the result is there for all to see: the literacy rate, which stood at 56 per cent in 1993-94, is now past 82 per cent.

The focus now is on infrastructure development. “Setting up a railway network between Sikkim and West Bengal, providing an airport for the

state, and constructing a new highway for heavy vehicles are on high priority right now,” Chamling says. “These will contribute hugely in attracting more tourists and higher investments to the state.”

For a state that is heavily dependent on tourism, Sikkim is doing itself no harm by being consistently rated as the greenest, “most sustainable” state in the country on the basis of year-round assessment by reputed centres of excellence and environmental agencies.

The Chief Minister believes there is no better fencing than social fencing. The initiative is exclusively meant to maintain the green cover and cleanliness across the state through spontaneous people's participation, which he says has been extensive and overwhelming in the past few years. The result: Sikkim's overall forest cover has increased by 3.53 per centage points—from 44.06 per cent in 1995 to 47.59 per cent in 2009.

Besides the green sheen, the government is also making sure that muscle is added to the state's clean sheen. The government and the civic authorities have left no stone unturned to get the people involved in the cleanliness drive sweeping Sikkim.

Organic farming is another area where the border state has taken a lead. Farming was traditionally organic before Sikkim merged with India in 1975. Keeping that in mind, the government made a historic declaration in the assembly in 2003 to transform Sikkim into a totally organic state. This was the first such policy initiative in India, and Sikkim became the first state to enact it. It was given a formal approach with the launch of the Sikkim Organic Mission in 2010, with a state-level workshop organised to create a road map to achieve this monumental task. It is slated to be completed by December 2015.

That is when the crowd might converge on MG Road in downtown Gangtok to celebrate afresh.

Follow the writer on Twitter @Soudhriti



WHY NO.1

7.7%

of the population lived below poverty line in 2013-14 against national average of 22 per cent.

Rs 263,000

Per capita GDP of Sikkim in 2014-15, the third highest among all states.

GAINS AND LOSSES

Hill state Sikkim puts up an aggressive display as beach boy Goa goes flat

SMALL STATE

STATE	RANK		
	2013	2014	2015
▲ SIKKIM	8	8	1
▲ PUDUCHERRY	4	4	2
▲ MEGHALAYA	5	5	3
▲ DELHI	7	6	4
▲ TRIPURA	6	7	5
▼ NAGALAND	3	3	6
▼ MANIPUR	2	2	7
▲ ARUNACHAL PRADESH	9	9	8
▼ GOA	1	1	9
◆ MIZORAM	10	10	10



BIG STATE | MADHYA PRADESH

THE GREEN EVOLUTION

The poor monsoon this year is expected to apply the brakes on the double-digit agricultural growth Madhya Pradesh has witnessed over the last 10 years, barring some exceptions. But it is among the few states where farmers are perhaps not that desperate. Called the rice bowl of India, MP, the highest soybean producer and undergoing a mustard revolution, will come out of the challenge posed by the monsoon since it is "sitting on robust agricultural growth", says Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan.

So how have they achieved this? Ashok Patsariya, a farmers' leader in Gwalior district,

says getting farm loans, selling the produce and storing them have shown a marked improvement. The rise in the number of warehouses, developed by both the government and private agencies, helps farmers save their produce for longer. The increased number of wheat procurement centres along the highways have also come as a huge boon. "We can sustain more than 10-per cent agriculture growth for the next five years (with these efforts)," says Principal Secretary, Agriculture, Rajesh Rajoura. The bonus provided on minimum support price of wheat has also helped increase wheat procurement.

—Piyush Babele



WHY NO.1

15%

rise in foodgrain yield for MP in 2014-15 amid a marginal dip in average national yield.

45%

increase in irrigated area in the last five years —the most claimed by any state.

"Our farmers are getting loan at -10% interest. If one borrows Rs 100, he has to repay Rs 90."

SHIVRAJ SINGH CHOUHAN
Chief Minister, Madhya Pradesh



SMALL STATE | PUDUCHERRY

EMPOWERED PLANTERS PLOUGH A PROFIT



JAISON G

COLLECTIVE SUBSIDY HAS IMPROVED THE LOT OF PUDUCHERRY FARMERS

A silent green revolution is under way in Puducherry. Empowered to become decision-makers in organised farming, cultivators in the state are reaping the benefit. And this has been achieved through the Farmers' Producer Organisation (FPO). The Pondicherry Agro Product Producers Company Ltd., the first FPO to get registered, now has 1,300 farmers as members, followed by Hi-tech Horticulture Producers Company Ltd. on the horticulture front.

As part of an FPO, farmers are organised into common interest groups under the centrally sponsored Agriculture Technology Management Agency (ATMA) and are provided with capacity-building measures. "They are given funds

MORE WAREHOUSES, PROCUREMENT CENTRES ARE A MAJOR BOON


PANKAJ TIWARI

"Farmers felt cole crops could be grown only in hilly areas. But we provided suitable technology, which ensured a great yield."

JAKIR HUSSAIN, Deputy Director, Agriculture (Information), Puducherry



WHY NO.1

87%

Net irrigated area in Puducherry in 2014-15—up from 85% in 2013-14.

9%

rise in foodgrain production, higher than average 7% in other small states.

that they circulate among themselves. (It is) a common platform where they have monthly discussions—there's a grievance committee where they can take their concerns and challenges to," says Jakir Hussain, Deputy Director of Agriculture (Information).

Under ATMA, farmers are also guided on growing newer crops and trained in upgraded technology such crops require. A lot of focus lies on how to minimise, and with time eradicate, the use of chemical pesticides and replace them with cheaper

and biological pest-control mechanisms. Earlier this year, the agriculture department introduced cole crops such as cabbage, cauliflower and broccoli (typically grown in winter) during the Rabi (winter) season on six one-acre demonstration farms and trained farmers. The department has also set up six farmers' markets within the town where they sell their produce. Ravichandiran, 61, an organic sugarcane farmer of PS Palayam village, says the farmers' markets have reduced room for corruption.

—Saranya Chakrapani

AGRICULTURE

Madhya Pradesh keeps marching forward as Tamil Nadu sinks. Puducherry makes another strong showing.

BIG STATE

STATE	RANK		
	2013	2014	2015
▲ MADHYA PRADESH	15	9	1
▲ RAJASTHAN	1	10	2
TELANGANA	0	0	3
▲ JHARKHAND	18	13	4
▲ WEST BENGAL	14	12	5
▲ BIHAR	5	20	6
▲ JAMMU & KASHMIR	6	15	7
▲ ODISHA	20	18	8
▲ ASSAM	16	17	9
▲ CHHATTISGARH	4	19	10
▼ PUNJAB	9	2	11
▼ UTTARAKHAND	19	6	12
▲ HIMACHAL PRADESH	8	14	13
▲ UTTAR PRADESH	13	16	14
▼ HARYANA	7	3	15
▼ ANDHRA PRADESH	11	4	16
▼ MAHARASHTRA	12	11	17
▼ KARNATAKA	10	8	18
▼ KERALA	3	5	19
▼ GUJARAT	2	7	20
▼ TAMIL NADU	17	1	21

SMALL STATE

STATE	RANK		
	2013	2014	2015
◆ PUDUCHERRY	10	1	1
▲ MEGHALAYA	9	8	2
▼ GOA	2	2	3
▲ SIKKIM	8	10	4
▼ ARUNACHAL PRADESH	3	4	5
▲ NAGALAND	1	9	6
▼ TRIPURA	7	5	7
▼ DELHI	6	3	8
▼ MIZORAM	5	6	9
▼ MANIPUR	4	7	10



BIG STATE | KERALA

CLASS OF 2015



GVHSS, KOZHIKODE, RAISES THE BAR FOR SCHOOLS IN THE STATE

Imagine a government-run school with well-equipped science labs, conference rooms, an interactive science centre, a well-stocked library, a state-of-the-art kitchen and canteen—comparable in infrastructure and classroom instruction to the best of private schools. Kerala has achieved all this and more through PRISM—Promoting Regional Schools to International Standards through Multiple Interventions. The state has transformed the Government Vocational Higher Secondary School for Girls (GVHSS) at Nadakkavu in Kozhikode to show how state-run schools can match private institutions.

Local MLA A. Pradeep Kumar garnered Rs 14 crore for the project, got permission for private partnership from the LDF government before it went out of power

SMALL STATE | GOA

WALK THE CHALK

Sussegado has been wrongly interpreted as laziness for years, Chief Minister Laxmikant Parsekar will tell you with a smile. The Goan penchant for chilling really means ‘contentment’, he says. For years, the state has had to deal with the image of being purely fun-oriented. But it’s the sussegado with the textbook that is now pivoting Goa to the top of India’s education pile. “We are not a state that needs to expand the number of schools, thanks to the population growth coming down to 1.6. We don’t need capacity for the future, so we are able to focus on improving quality,” he says.

Government spending on education was raised by 64 per cent since the BJP came to power in 2012, says Parsekar, a former school principal



WHY NO.1

Rs 616,000

Total expenditure on education per person in the 6-23 age group in 2013-14

Rs 3,578

Rise in average household outlay on education—from Rs 5,218 in 2011-12 to Rs 8,796 in 2013-14

“We’ve never seen expenditure on education as expenditure, but as an investment.”

LAXMIKANT PARSEKAR
Chief Minister, Goa



in 2011. The project became a huge success with the help of stakeholders such as the Faizal and Shabana Foundation, and promoted by NRI businessman Faizal Kottikollon and wife Shabana of KEF Holdings, and Prof. Saji Gopinath of IIM, Kozhikode.

The Congress-led UDF has been equally supportive of the efforts to improve the image of government schools and make them attractive to students. Bolstered by its success,

Kerala has set the goal of becoming the first state with total primary education by 2016. At the collegiate level, there has been implementation of reforms such as choice-based credit and semester system, autonomous colleges, honours-degree programmes and insistence on National Assessment and Accreditation Council and National Board of Accreditation for institutions of higher learning.

—Amarnath K. Menon

"We can replicate this (GVHSS) model. Kerala has the most enduring traditions in providing education and (has been) enriching it from the early 20th century."

P.K. ABDU RABB,
 Education Minister, Kerala



WHY NO.1

10%

increase in enrolment of girl students, the highest among large states.

16%

of 8,000 new schools opened in last one year are in Kerala.



CHIEF MINISTER LAXMIKANT PARSEKAR
 AT A GOVERNMENT PRIMARY SCHOOL

himself, and counts groundbreaking schemes such as Mamta and Laadli for giving a leg-up to girls' education. When he was in medical college, enrolment was 80 per cent boys and 20 per cent girls. Last year, the ratio had reversed: 75-80 per cent girls and 23 per cent boys.

Alongside a focus on primary and higher secondary education, Goa is also developing into a space where vocational and technical is taken seriously. Besides the sprawling BITS Campus, the National Institute of Technology is conducting its first convocation this year after having conducted classes in Goa Engineering College. The government has acquired land for the institution. Negotiations are also on to establish an IIT Goa campus. The state has 1,800 seats for degree courses, 1,000 for diplomas, and is aiming to boost the number of medical seats from 150 to 200 in two years, for which infrastructure capacity has already been built. —Gayatri Jayaraman

EDUCATION

Kerala, Goa top the charts with continued focus on the curriculum

BIG STATE

STATE	RANK		
	2013	2014	2015
▲ KERALA	1	2	1
▲ GUJARAT	13	7	2
▲ PUNJAB	6	14	3
▲ HARYANA	7	8	4
◆ RAJASTHAN	16	5	5
▼ JAMMU & KASHMIR	20	1	6
▲ ASSAM	11	17	7
▲ KARNATAKA	3	19	8
▲ UTTARAKHAND	19	18	9
▼ HIMACHAL PRADESH	18	6	10
▲ MAHARASHTRA	4	20	11
TELANGANA	0	0	12
▼ TAMIL NADU	10	3	13
▼ ANDHRA PRADESH	2	4	14
▲ ODISHA	15	16	15
▼ MADHYA PRADESH	8	13	16
▼ UTTAR PRADESH	14	10	17
▼ CHHATTISGARH	5	9	18
▼ JHARKHAND	17	12	19
▼ WEST BENGAL	12	11	20
▼ BIHAR	9	15	21

SMALL STATE

STATE	RANK		
	2013	2014	2015
◆ GOA	1	1	1
▲ MIZORAM	9	10	2
▼ PUDUCHERRY	6	2	3
▼ NAGALAND	2	3	4
▲ MANIPUR	4	7	5
▲ SIKKIM	7	9	6
▼ ARUNACHAL PRADESH	10	5	7
▼ MEGHALAYA	8	4	8
▼ DELHI	5	8	9
▼ TRIPURA	3	6	10



BIG STATE | JAMMU & KASHMIR

A FLOOD OF NEW HOSPITALS



J&K HEALTH MINISTER LAL SINGH AT GOVERNMENT MEDICAL COLLEGE IN SRINAGAR

The only children's hospital in Kashmir, GB Pant Children Hospital, located in the Badami Bagh cantonment area of Srinagar, presented a horror story in 2012 when its high incidence of child mortality hit the headlines, forcing the then CM Omar Abdullah to initiate an inquiry into the deaths. Just as things started improving, the devastating floods of 2014 damaged the hospital's infrastructure posing a serious threat to the life of neonates and infants. In July this year, 18 truckloads of garbage was removed from the hospital and in September the ground floor, which was submerged in the floodwater, started functioning again.

There is a newfound thrust—both on the part of the central and state governments—on creating health infrastructure in the state. The new government led by Chief Minister Mufti Mohammad Sayeed has sanctioned another 200-bed children's hospital in Bemina on the outskirts of Srinagar. The Union Ministry of

ABID BHAT

SMALL STATE | MANIPUR

RURAL OUTREACH

If Manipur's Director of Health Services Dr O. Ibomcha Singh is to be believed, unemployment can prove to be a catalyst for change. The state has 12,000 registered nurses but only 2,000 are employed. "The unemployed nurses go back to their villages and help the community with their expertise. They also create awareness on institutional delivery. That's the primary reason why Manipur has made a big leap when it comes to reducing its infant mortality rate and maternal mortality rate," says Singh, who claims the state has one nurse for every 260 people against a national ratio of one nurse for 2,450 people.

Mayangmayaun Sonia, a 20-year-old woman who comes for a regular pregnancy check-up at the Thoubal District Hospital, agrees. She was brought to the hospital by one of four



WHY NO.1

47

beds per hospital in 2014, a significant jump from 26 beds per hospital in 2013.

3.5%

of the GDP is the state's annual spend on healthcare; India spends 1.02% of the GDP on healthcare.

"Improved healthcare is the result of exploring ideas that suit community needs."

OKRAM IBOBI SINGH
CM, Manipur



KAUSHIK DEKA

Health and Family Welfare has also identified five districts in the state for new medical colleges besides two cancer institutes, one each in Kashmir and Jammu. Two 200-bed maternity hospitals, one each in Kashmir and Jammu, are also in the pipeline.

The state government has introduced Skilled Birth Attendant (SBA) training in simulation labs. "A state-of-the-art facility has been introduced at the Regional Institute of Health and Family Welfare, Dhobiwan, where doctors, nurses

and auxiliary nurses are trained in all aspects of skilled birth attendance," says the state's Health Secretary M.K. Bhandari. He also claims the sex ratio has improved through policing: "We formed district-level teams to inspect ultrasound clinics. Some clinics found to have been indulging in prenatal sex determination tests were closed down to send a signal to others."

"We also rationalised staff so that district hospitals and 24x7 Primary Health Centres remain functional," adds Bhandari.

—Naseer Ganai

"The director of health services holds monthly review meetings with all CMOs and medical superintendents and they are asked to plug gaps in areas identified."

M.K. BHANDARI
 Jammu and Kashmir Health Secretary



WHY NO.1

55%

increase in government expenditure on medical services.

7%

increase in number of registered doctors in the state.

DOCTORS AT WORK AT THE THOUBAL DISTRICT HOSPITAL

nurses in her village, Moijing. Not just nurses, the state's doctor-patient ratio of 1:1,000 is also higher than the national average of 1:1,777.

"The state's annual spend on healthcare is 3.5 per cent of the GDP while the national healthcare expense is 1.02 per cent of the GDP," says Chief Minister Okram Ibobi Singh.

Along with budgetary allocation, innovative ideas have helped changed the face of healthcare in Manipur. For instance, every specialist doctor is required to spend at least two months in a remote centre. "Usually when doctors are transferred to remote areas, they lobby hard for a stay or refuse to move. But they don't mind the rotation system. Locals thus have doctors round the year," says Ibomcha Singh. The government also organises health camps by specialist doctors in remote areas once a month.

—Kaushik Deka



HEALTH

Jammu and Kashmir and Manipur make spectacular gains while Kerala slips from top rank to the also-rans

BIG STATE

STATE	RANK		
	2013	2014	2015
▲ JAMMU & KASHMIR	4	19	1
▲ PUNJAB	11	3	2
▲ JHARKHAND	18	18	3
▲ GUJARAT	5	17	4
▲ TAMIL NADU	6	7	5
◆ UTTARAKHAND	3	6	6
▲ HIMACHAL PRADESH	1	10	7
▼ MADHYA PRADESH	10	5	8
▼ ANDHRA PRADESH	12	2	9
▼ HARYANA	20	9	10
▼ CHHATTISGARH	13	8	11
▲ ASSAM	9	13	12
▼ KARNATAKA	7	11	13
▼ WEST BENGAL	17	12	14
▼ ODISHA	19	14	15
▲ MAHARASHTRA	2	20	16
▼ RAJASTHAN	14	4	17
TELANGANA	0	0	18
▼ UTTAR PRADESH	16	15	19
▼ KERALA	8	1	20
▼ BIHAR	15	16	21

SMALL STATE

STATE	RANK		
	2013	2014	2015
▲ MANIPUR	2	8	1
◆ GOA	4	2	2
▲ SIKKIM	3	10	3
◆ DELHI	9	4	4
▼ NAGALAND	1	3	5
▼ MIZORAM	10	1	6
▼ PUDUCHERRY	7	5	7
▼ ARUNACHAL PRADESH	6	7	8
▼ MEGHALAYA	5	6	9
▼ TRIPURA	8	9	10



BIG STATE | KERALA

REAPING THE DIVIDEND OF DEVOLUTION

On October 13, the 40-month-long run of the state's most-wanted criminal came to an end in Kerala. Booked in 200-odd cases over a decade, he rapidly graduated from stealing goats—which earned him the moniker 'Aadu'—to robbery and, finally, the murder of a police driver, Maniyan Pillai, on June 25, 2012. In a massive manhunt, the police tailed over 40 people who resembled him. Finally, it was a Facebook page, 'Justice for Maniyan Pillai', which logged 3,148 followers some of whom provided vital clues, that did Aadu in. Swift and sustained

action such as this contributes to crime detection in Kerala.

Effective policing, however, is just a facet of the state's administration. Many signature schemes of the government have been channelled through gram panchayats. "Take Asraya, the first integrated community-based initiative for those not covered by any of the designated poverty alleviation programmes," says Chief Minister Oommen Chandy, "I threatened to stop all fund flow to reluctant panchayats and municipalities in order to ensure they fell in line." Implemented in 1,209 panchayats, corporations and



OOMMEN CHANDY MEETS PEOPLE AT HIS OFFICIAL RESIDENCE

"Good governance has been achieved through devolution of funds to gram panchayats."

OOMMEN CHANDY
Kerala Chief Minister

SMALL STATE | SIKKIM

GOVERNANCE AT PEOPLE'S DOORSTEP

A decentralised government in Gangtok and staying connected with the people across the hill state lie at the heart of public administration in Sikkim. The state government has established at least 31 Gram Vikas Kendras (village development centres) and 176 Gram Prashasan Kendras (village administration centres) to strengthen delivery of public services at the local level.

As part of decentralisation and democratisation of the administration, the state government has set up block development offices (BDO) and village administrative centres (panchayat offices) in the remotest parts of Sikkim. This is handy because nearly 75 per cent of the population lives in rural areas. That the move

has helped the villagers is evinced by the fact that Chief Minister Pawan Kumar Chamling's party, the Sikkim Democratic Front, has remained in power since 1994. All tenders up to Rs 25 lakh get sanctioned at these panchayat offices, at BDOs up to Rs 50 lakh, and Rs 2 crore at all district-level offices.

The government's record in law and order has also been spotless thus far. "There are 109 insurgency groups in India. But none of them belong to Sikkim," says Chamling.

Sikkim also recorded a sharp fall in the poverty level, next only to Goa. Latest figures show that the BPL population came down from 30.9 per cent in 2004-05 to 8.19 per cent in 2011-12 in the state.

—Soudhriti Bhabani

SUBIR HALDER





WHY NO.1

2%

decrease in pending cases under the IPC, as opposed to a 12 per cent rise nationwide.

Two of every five rupees in the state's budget is earmarked for local bodies; the allocation of Rs 25,336 crore for 2011-16 is more than double that of 2006-11.

municipalities across the state, 72,116 destitute families have been identified under Asraya so far.

Devolving more power to local bodies and allowing them to devise five-year plans, submit projects of any scale and size online and get swift clearance in turn has changed the paradigm of execution of schemes and ensured funds don't lapse as they did due to non-utilisation in time under annual plans. Chandy points out that the Kerala model of decentralisation is now being implemented in 250,000 villages across the country.

To empower women, the government has instituted Sandesh, whereby 1,000 women each will be taught entrepreneurial skills in all 978 panchayats, 60 municipalities and five municipal corporations of the state. Mini-panchayats, called Sevagram, are also coming up in each ward and digitalisation of services is being done simultaneously to enable direct benefit transfers.

—Amarnath K. Menon



PEOPLE GREET P.K. CHAMLING AT HIS OFFICIAL RESIDENCE



WHY NO.1

242%

increase in the number of e-transactions per 100,000 population, from 190 in 2014 to 461 in 2015.

Share of pending cases dropped from 36 per cent in 2013 to 18 per cent in 2014.

"People do not need to come all the way to Gangtok to get their work done any longer."

PAWAN KUMAR CHAMLING
Sikkim Chief Minister

GOVERNANCE

Kerala and Andhra Pradesh are the leading big states, Puducherry is the laggard among small states

BIG STATE

STATE	RANK		
	2013	2014	2015
◆ KERALA	20	1	1
◆ ANDHRA PRADESH	1	2	2
◆ WEST BENGAL	3	3	3
▲ HARYANA	7	11	4
▲ CHHATTISGARH	8	20	5
TELANGANA	0	0	6
◆ PUNJAB	17	7	7
▼ ASSAM	6	6	8
▲ TAMIL NADU	16	17	9
◆ MAHARASHTRA	10	10	10
▲ ODISHA	14	13	11
▲ JAMMU & KASHMIR	15	16	12
▲ KARNATAKA	18	18	13
▲ UTTAR PRADESH	11	15	14
▼ JHARKHAND	5	9	15
▼ BIHAR	12	8	16
▼ HIMACHAL PRADESH	13	4	17
▲ MADHYA PRADESH	2	19	18
▼ RAJASTHAN	9	12	19
▼ UTTARAKHAND	19	14	20
▼ GUJARAT	4	5	21

SMALL STATE

STATE	RANK		
	2013	2014	2015
▲ SIKKIM	2	2	1
▲ MEGHALAYA	7	6	2
▼ DELHI	5	1	3
◆ MIZORAM	8	4	4
▼ TRIPURA	1	8	5
▼ MANIPUR	4	9	6
▼ ARUNACHAL PRADESH	3	5	7
▲ NAGALAND	9	7	8
▼ GOA	6	3	9
◆ PUDUCHERRY	10	10	10

BIG STATE | **TELANGANA**

LEVERAGING CAPITAL GAINS

Vijayadasami 2015 is an important milestone for the 17-month-old state of Telangana. Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhara Reddy chose the auspicious occasion to flag off an ambitious housing scheme to provide two-bedroom houses for poor Dalits. While 60,000 such houses are to be built in the next six months, another 100,000 will come up in a year across the 10 districts of the state.

"Our goal is to help the poor enhance their quality of life," says Reddy, pointing out that providing drinking water to each and every household, both poor and rich, is equally important. For this, the

state is building a massive water grid—the Telangana Drinking Water Supply Scheme.

Telangana is leveraging on the head start with Hyderabad, a populous capital for a state of its size, being the fifth largest metropolitan area in the country where at least one in every three persons—1.3 million of its 3.5 million residents—live either in the city or other urban pockets. This is an inherent advantage in creating an ecosystem to realise targets with any citizen-centric initiative. This is why there is greater access to banks, post offices, mobile phones, broadband and domestic LPG

A PRABHAKAR RAO



K. CHANDRASEKHAR RAO

SMALL STATE | **DELHI**

DIGITAL IS THE NEW NORMAL

Having a bank account or a mobile phone or communicating through messaging services such as WhatsApp is increasingly becoming the new normal in the nation's capital and this digital revolution is being driven from ground up.

As life becomes more chaotic with its roads and air quality choking its residents, the city-state is hoping to find refuge in its digital infrastructure. Delhi emerges on top in inclusive development—which includes parameters such as access to bank branches, post offices, telephone connections, broadband and LPG connections. The state has been proactive in adopting policies on e-governance



WHY NO.1

37.3

The number of broadband connections per 100 persons in 2014-15, up from 17.6 in 2013-14..

42.6 mn

The number of mobile connections in 2013-14, up from 40.4 million in 2012-13..

CM ARVIND KEJRIWAL INTERACTS WITH PEOPLE WHILE ON A MORNING WALK





Telangana has a bank branch for every 7,654 people while the all-India ratio is 1:10,004, and a post office for every 6,006 people as opposed to a national ratio of 1:7,814..

There is an LPG connection for every four persons in the state while the national ratio is 1:7..

"Besides housing for the poor, our game changers include an elaborate drinking water supply system and restoration of local lakes."

B.V. PAPA RAO Adviser to the Telangana government

connections in the state.

The government has, as part of its social safety net strategy and inclusive growth, introduced Aasara Pensions to ensure a dignified life to the old, widowed and the differently abled. The state also offers similar doles to *beedi* workers—mostly poor women exposed to health hazards—toddy tappers and AIDS patients.

The state has also modified the food security scheme to cover 28 million of the 35 million residents under the rice subsidy programme that provides 6 kg of rice at Re 1 per kg per person without any limit on the number of eligible members in a family. In total, the state is spending Rs 24,000 crore annually on welfare schemes.

Another out-of-the-box approach is to offer education—from KG to PG—free of cost as an equal opportunity, irrespective of caste and community reservations, to poor children. —*Amarnath K. Menon*



PARVEEN NEGI

"During the last decade Delhi has seen the highest income growth of 7 per cent, while income growth in the rest of the country was 3-3.5 per cent."

ALAKH N. SHARMA Director, Institute for Human Development

and in using technology for better targeting of subsidies. "Even if you come to Delhi and if you are not skilled enough, you will find jobs," says Najeeb Jung, the lieutenant governor of Delhi.

According to the Delhi Human Development Report, 2013, lives of Delhiites has improved considerably. Delhi now has near-universal electrification, poverty levels have also reduced. However, equity continues to be a concern.

—*Shweta Punj*

INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT

The national capital leads from the front on carrying everyone along, as does India's newest state

BIG STATE

STATE	RANK 2015
TELANGANA	1
MAHARASHTRA	2
ANDHRA PRADESH	3
GUJARAT	4
CHHATTISGARH	5
HARYANA	6
UTTARAKHAND	7
WEST BENGAL	8
JHARKHAND	9
BIHAR	10
RAJASTHAN	11
HIMACHAL PRADESH	12
KARNATAKA	13
ASSAM	14
MADHYA PRADESH	15
UTTAR PRADESH	16
JAMMU & KASHMIR	17
KERALA	18
ODISHA	19
PUNJAB	20
TAMIL NADU	21

SMALL STATE

STATE	RANK 2015
DELHI	1
MEGHALAYA	2
NAGALAND	3
PUDUCHERRY	4
TRIPURA	5
MIZORAM	6
MANIPUR	7
GOA	8
ARUNACHAL PRADESH	9
SIKKIM	10



"Good roads are the key to development. I have increased the length of pucca roads five times in the last 15 years."

TARUN GOGOI
Chief Minister, Assam



TARUN GOGOI'S FOCUS HAS BEEN ON INFRASTRUCTURE SINCE DAY ONE

INFRASTRUCTURE

Assam's is a measured climb, while Andhra Pradesh bears the brunt of bifurcation

BIG STATE

STATE	RANK		
	2013	2014	2015
▲ ASSAM	3	7	1
▲ ODISHA	4	16	2
▲ BIHAR	8	18	3
▲ WEST BENGAL	5	14	4
▲ UTTAR PRADESH	2	13	5
▲ MADHYA PRADESH	12	10	6
▲ JHARKHAND	11	17	7
◆ RAJASTHAN	10	8	8
▲ JAMMU & KASHMIR	1	15	9
▲ CHHATTISGARH	9	20	10
▲ MAHARASHTRA	17	19	11
▼ HARYANA	18	9	12
▼ UTTARAKHAND	6	4	13
TELANGANA	0	0	14
▼ ANDHRA PRADESH	15	1	15
▼ GUJARAT	13	12	16
▼ TAMIL NADU	7	11	17
▼ KARNATAKA	14	6	18
▼ HIMACHAL PRADESH	16	3	19
▼ KERALA	19	2	20
▼ PUNJAB	20	5	21



WHY NO.1

17%

increase in length of pucca road from 2011 to 2013-14; national growth average 4%.

70%

Assam households had power connection in 2013-14—up from 37% in 2011.

BIG STATE | ASSAM

BRIDGING THE BASIC DEVELOPMENT GAP

When he took over, Assam Chief Minister Tarun Gogoi adopted a simple mantra for development: build and develop roads and bridges. "If our agriculture had to improve, the farmers needed roads for their produce to reach the market fast. If healthcare facilities had to reach remote areas, we needed roads. If I had to stop insurgency and maintain law and order, we needed roads," Gogoi says. And before one can probe the state's longest-serving Chief Minister on the success rate of his development mantra, Gogoi belts out statistics to prove why he is the most deserving claimant to the honour. The length of pucca roads in the state, he points out, has increased from just 545 km in 2001 to 25,189 km in 2013-14. The addition in national highways in the same period has been not as encouraging, though—from 2,748 km to 3,791 km.

But the 79-year-old is a worried man as he looks down, from his

home atop Kainadhora Hill, at a traffic snarl on GS Road in Khanapara: "The national highways around Guwahati must be broadened and we need to improve our traffic behavior."

Along with roads, Gogoi's next important goal was to improve the state's power transmission capacity. "Even if we don't generate enough power, we can buy it. But it's of no use if we cannot take it to end-users," he says. "In the last 14 years, the transmission capacity has increased from 550 MW to 1600 MW."

Facing elections next year, Gogoi is miffed with the Centre for taking away special status category from Assam. But he always finds innovative ways to support his vision: "Once I had to explain to my wife why I danced with some World Bank officials. External assistance, which comes as 90 per cent grant and 10 per cent loan, has helped the state in a big way. But I had to cajole them into believing that I meant business."

—Kaushik Deka

SMALL STATE | **MIZORAM**

POWER AND ROAD TO ALL CORNERS

For a state that is India's second least populated according to the 2011 census, Mizoram boasts of an infrastructure link that will be the envy of all. As of 2014, nearly 90 per cent of households in the border-state were connected by pucca roads. What's more, that figure is up from only 76 per cent in the year before.

Little wonder, tiny Mizoram spent more than Rs 2,000 crore on construction of roads and their maintenance, according to the Economic Survey 2014-15. It's a huge amount for a state with an annual budget of just over Rs 6,000 crore. The state government's share in this is miniscule—Rs 20 crore out of Rs 2,000 crore. The rest is financed either by the Union government or by multilateral agencies. In June 2014, for instance, the World Bank sanctioned a loan of Rs 650 crore for a road project to connect Mizoram with Myanmar and Bangladesh, on either side of it. Named "Mizoram State Roads II—Regional Transport Connectivity Project", it will finance

the building of 91 km of roads. This include a 22-km section linking Lunglei, the state's second biggest town, with the Bangladesh border; a 27.5-km stretch between another major town, Champhai, and the Myanmar border; and a 41.7-km north-south stretch connecting with border roads, leading towards Bangladesh in the west and Myanmar's Arakan region in south.

Yet Chief Minister Lal Thanhawla is not basking in that glory: "The remote areas are still not connected with all-weather roads and my government is striving to achieve that despite fund crunch."

The state has great numbers to flaunt even on the power front—95 per cent households had access to electricity in 2013-14, up from 84 per cent in 2011-12. According to Lal Thanhawla, the state signed nine MoUs with five developers between 2008 and 2015 to build hydroelectricity projects with a combined capacity of 2411 MW.

—Kaushik Deka

INFRASTRUCTURE

Mizoram continues its steady climb, reaching the apex, as Sikkim slips

SMALL STATE

STATE	RANK		
	2013	2014	2015
▲ MIZORAM	6	3	1
▲ MANIPUR	7	5	2
▲ TRIPURA	9	7	3
▲ MEGHALAYA	8	8	4
▼ NAGALAND	3	4	5
▼ SIKKIM	2	1	6
▼ DELHI	10	6	7
▼ GOA	1	2	8
◆ PUDUCHERRY	4	9	9
◆ ARUNACHAL PRADESH	5	10	10



WHY NO.1

95%

households had electricity connection in 2013-14—up from 84% in 2011-12.

90%

households in the state had access to a pucca road in 2014, up 14% in a year.

World Bank has sanctioned a Rs 650-crore loan to build 91 km of roads.

"It's great to know that we are the most improved in this category but we still have much to do."

LAL THANHAWLA
Chief Minister, Mizoram



THE CM NOW LOOKS AT CONNECTING THE REMOTE AREAS

VIKRAM SHARMA

BIG STATE | **GUJARAT**

PROJECTS NOT JUST ON PAPER

SHAILESH RAVAL

That Gujarat has been one of India's leading states in drawing investments is an established fact, headlined by its bi-annual global investors' summit, Vibrant Gujarat, a brainchild of then chief minister Narendra Modi in 2003. It does the state no harm, however, when an external agency also attests to the state's amenable investment scenario. Such plaudits came in recently from no less than the World Bank, which ranked Gujarat as the top Indian state in "Ease of Doing Business" with a score of 71.14%. The ranking parameters were based on a 98-point action plan prepared by the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP) to assess regulatory reforms and governance. "Our strong point has been a strong follow-up on industrial projects once they arrive," says



GUJARAT CM ANANDBEN PATEL AT THE INAUGURATION OF FORD'S SANAND PLANT

SMALL STATE | **SIKKIM**

WHY NO.1

1945%

rise in investment, from Rs 53 crore in 2013-14 to Rs 1,031 crore in 2014-15.

FDI inflow ratio to total GDP has grown from 81.79% in 2013 to 88.63% in 2014.

"We are welcoming investments in clean industry for creating employment without impacting the ecology."

UGEN T. GYATSO
Industries Minister, Sikkim

THE NEW HUB OF PHARMA INDUSTRY



SUBIR HALDER



WHY NO.1

61%

growth in investment between 2013-14 and 2014-15, compared to the national average of 40 per cent.

The World Bank has ranked Gujarat as top Indian state in "Ease of Doing Business" with a score of 71.14%.

"The CM regularly monitors the progress of projects by holding video conferences with district collectors. Her focus is not only on big projects but the MSME sector too."

MAMTA VERMA

Industries Commissioner, Gujarat

state Industry and Mines Secretary Arvind Agrawal.

That Chief Minister Anandiben Patel hasn't allowed the investment tempo left behind by Modi to slow down is proven by facts. World Bank aside, the latest figures released by the Union government also put Gujarat at number one position in industrial investment between 2010 and 2015. During this period, out of industrial proposals worth Rs 319,920 crore implemented across the country, Gujarat accounted for 36.5 per cent. The state has also got the highest investment proposals in 2015 worth Rs 51,108 crore, 21.6 per cent of the total investment proposals received nationwide from January to August this year.

The Chief Minister's strongest point in governance is solid follow-up, a quality she has preserved ever since she excelled first as a teacher before beginning her political career in 1988.

—Uday Mahurkar

INVESTMENT

Gujarat builds on its gains from last year to take the top slot but 2014's small state biggie Goa slides dramatically

BIG STATE

STATE	RANK		
	2013	2014	2015
▲ GUJARAT	16	5	1
▲ KARNATAKA	18	3	2
▲ MAHARASHTRA	6	4	3
TELANGANA	0	0	4
▼ UTTARAKHAND	3	1	5
▲ ASSAM	13	11	6
▲ ANDHRA PRADESH	4	14	7
▼ ODISHA	17	7	8
▲ TAMIL NADU	14	20	9
▲ UTTAR PRADESH	19	13	10
▲ BIHAR	8	15	11
◆ WEST BENGAL	12	12	12
▼ JHARKHAND	11	2	13
▼ RAJASTHAN	9	10	14
▲ HIMACHAL PRADESH	1	19	15
▼ CHHATTISGARH	15	8	16
◆ HARYANA	7	17	17
▼ PUNJAB	2	16	18
▼ JAMMU & KASHMIR	20	18	19
▼ MADHYA PRADESH	10	6	20
▼ KERALA	5	9	21

SMALL STATE

STATE	RANK		
	2013	2014	2015
▲ SIKKIM	10	4	1
▲ PUDUCHERRY	3	8	2
▲ MEGHALAYA	4	6	3
▼ DELHI	5	3	4
◆ NAGALAND	6	5	5
▼ ARUNACHAL PRADESH	9	2	6
◆ TRIPURA	7	7	7
▼ GOA	1	1	8
▲ MANIPUR	2	10	9
▼ MIZORAM	8	9	10



THE CIPLA PHARMACEUTICALS
PLANT IN SIKKIM

If you thought Sikkim is only about tourism and Buddhism, think again. The small state is the new hub for the pharmaceutical industry. All leading companies in the sector—Zydus Cadila, Alkem, Sun Pharma, Cipla, Golden Cross Pharma, Micro Labs—have their presence in the state. These aside, more than 450 micro, small and medium industrial units have registered themselves with the District Industries Centre in the state.

The state is also offering special incentives to women entrepreneurs besides power subsidy, financial support for technical know-how and subsidy on cost incurred on quality control measures.

The re-opening of the Nathu La trade route in 2006 has also resulted in a steady increase in border trade. Exports to China rose from Rs 27.87 lakh in 2006 to Rs 16 crore in 2014 while imports grew from Rs 6.88 lakh to Rs 1.02 crore.

—Soudhriti Bhabani

BIG STATE | **HARYANA**

PLUGGING THE LEAKS PAYS

Haryana's Harvard-educated finance minister is evidently a happy man. Captain Abhimanyu Singh Sindhu, who figured strongly among the four or five chief ministerial hopefuls after the BJP swept the predominantly Jat state in October 2014, says it has been his mission to "convert despair to trust", for both the people and entrepreneurs looking to invest in Haryana.

Politically, things have not been looking so good for the government led by Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar, but Captain Abhimanyu's numbers happily reflect a very different story. Haryana's per capita GDP is way above all other large states—increasing to Rs 164,000 in 2014-2015 from Rs 146,000 in 2013-2014. Not just this, GDP in the service sector

increased by 10 per cent. GDP in the state's manufacturing sector recorded an even more impressive growth of 16 per cent.

The finance minister attributes much of this to the government's single-minded focus on "plugging points of corruption" and "consistently pushing transparency in governance".

The big-time introduction of online access to government has paid off. Says Captain Abhimanyu, "Traders were issued more than 150,000 C-Forms (sales tax) in the past six months, and 160,000 returns were tendered online," which improved both income and revenues.

The new government, he says, also worked overtime to plug leaks in the disbursement of social sector benefits through direct transfers to personal

bank accounts of beneficiaries that include nearly 1.8 million old age pensioners in the state. This was in addition to more than Rs 2,000 crore transferred to farmers for crop losses.

He calls it "irrigating the base of the economic pyramid", contending that "money in public hands invariably leads to a churning of the economy". Captain Abhimanyu points to the fact that his government did not compromise on necessary expenditure to showcase nicer numbers. "We have optimally utilised credit limits and this helped rejuvenate the state's economy," he says.

Already looking at the year ahead, the finance minister promises a Rs 1,000-crore fund dedicated to new start-ups by young professionals.

—Asit Jolly

SMALL STATE | **SIKKIM**

WHY NO.1

Rs 800 cr

internal revenue generation in 2012-13, up from Rs 42.72 crore in 1993-94.

Rs 251 cr

Revenue earned from power has increased from Rs 3.57 crore in 1993-94 to Rs 251 crore in 2012-13.

"Many hydropower projects have come up in our state. We are constantly developing our infrastructure."

PAWAN KUMAR CHAMLING
Sikkim Chief Minister

GOING GREEN, GROWING GREEN



SUBIR HALDER



**HARYANA FINANCE
MINISTER CAPTAIN
ABHIMANYU**

SANDEEP SAHDEV



WHY NO.1

16%

growth in manufacturing sector between 2013-14 and 2014-15, three percentage points higher than the national average.

10%

GDP in service sector rose 10 per cent between 2013-14 and 2014-15, two percentage points more than the national average.

"We will soon announce a Rs 1,000-crore fund dedicated to new start-ups by young professionals."

CAPTAIN ABHIMANYU SINGH
SINDHU, Haryana Finance Minister



**THE CHUZACHEN HYDROELECTRIC
POWER PROJECT IN SIKKIM**

A land-locked state bound by foreign nations on three sides, Sikkim has shown how to tap its limited resources and spread its wings through hydroelectricity generation, tourism and pharmaceuticals. The state government is encouraging clean industry. This hasn't impacted growth: Rs 82.26 crore was added to the state exchequer in 2012-13.

Power production in Sikkim went up from 65.81 million units in 1993-94 to 669 million units in 2012-13. "We are constantly developing our infrastructure to ensure that big industries come to Sikkim," says Chief Minister Pawan Chamling.

More than 20 major pharmaceutical companies also have a presence in Sikkim. Among other industries that have got a boost here in the last two decades are breweries, wellness products, cosmetics, food processing and packaging, besides the hospitality sector.

—Soudhriti Bhabani

MACRO ECONOMY

While Haryana makes rapid strides under a new government, a decades-old regime in Sikkim works magic anew

BIG STATE

STATE	RANK		
	2013	2014	2015
▲ HARYANA	12	9	1
▲ MAHARASHTRA	5	13	2
▼ TAMIL NADU	11	2	3
▲ ASSAM	10	19	4
▲ ODISHA	6	14	5
▲ JAMMU & KASHMIR	20	16	6
▲ BIHAR	4	18	7
▲ PUNJAB	14	15	8
▲ WEST BENGAL	15	11	9
▼ GUJARAT	1	6	10
▼ JHARKHAND	18	8	11
▼ KARNATAKA	19	7	12
▼ KERALA	2	5	13
▲ UTTAR PRADESH	16	17	14
▲ RAJASTHAN	3	20	15
▼ ANDHRA PRADESH	8	12	16
▼ CHHATTISGARH	13	10	17
▼ UTTARAKHAND	7	1	18
▼ MADHYA PRADESH	9	4	19
TELANGANA	0	0	20
▼ HIMACHAL PRADESH	17	3	21

SMALL STATE

STATE	RANK		
	2013	2014	2015
▲ SIKKIM	5	5	1
▼ GOA	1	1	2
▼ PUDUCHERRY	6	2	3
▲ DELHI	2	10	4
▲ MEGHALAYA	4	7	5
▲ MIZORAM	9	8	6
▼ TRIPURA	8	6	7
▲ MANIPUR	3	9	8
▼ ARUNACHAL PRADESH	10	4	9
▼ NAGALAND	7	3	10



BIG STATE | HARYANA

A BREATH OF FRESH AIR NEAR THE NCR

There is a spot of good news for the people of Haryana: the air is more breathable in the state despite the fact that 13 of its 21 districts are close to the considerably more polluted Delhi. Overall, the state has succeeded in cutting levels of Respirable Suspended Particulate Matter (RSPM) almost by half, from 267 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ in 2008 to 147 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ in 2015. There has been equally significant decline in Sulfur Dioxide (SO_2) and Nitrogen Dioxide (NO_2) concentration in air, making Haryana the most improved state in air quality.

Environment Minister Capt. Abhimanyu Sindhu attributes this “steady progress” to “greater

engagement” with citizens, particularly entrepreneurs and the farming community. The state has convinced more entrepreneurs to install effluent treatment plants (ETPs) and air pollution control devices. In just the past 12 months, 222 dedicated ETPs and some 370 air pollution control devices have been installed by private units.

Thirty-five large units have put in online systems for real-time monitoring of air, gas emission and effluent quality prior to disposal. The Public Health Engineering department and the Haryana Urban Development Authority have, meanwhile, constructed 19 new sewage treatment plants in the past year.

—Asit Jolly



WHY NO.1

19

sewage treatment plants constructed across the state in the past year.

RSPM concentration declined from 267 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ in 2008 to 147 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ in 2015.

($\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$: micrograms per cubic metre of air)

“The steady progress made by the state is due to greater engagement with the citizens.”

CAPT. ABHIMANYU SINDHU,
Environment Minister, Haryana

SMALL STATE | PUDUCHERRY

WASHING WASTE OFF WATER



JAISON G

ENVIRONMENT MINISTER T. THIAGARAJAN AT AN ANALYTICAL LAB, PUDUCHERRY

In August, the otherwise nondescript Chinnakalpet fishing hamlet in Puducherry got a unique waste water treatment plant. Developed by Pondicherry University, the low-cost method uses simple aquatic plants to absorb nutrients, pathogens and microorganisms from domestic sewage fed to it from almost 40 houses around town. It has a capacity to treat 10,000 litres of waste water. This, though, is only the latest instance of the state's efforts to save the environment. In the last one year, the Department of Science, Technology and Environment (DSTE) has spent Rs 282 crore to expand Puducherry's underground sewage system to cover five zones. The DSTE also commissioned a treatment plant at Lawspet this year with the capacity to treat 17 million litres of sewage per day.

SANDEEP SAHDEV



TIKKAR TAAL, MORNI HILLS: THE AIR IS MORE BREATHABLE ACROSS HARYANA

"An industrial unit or hospital's treated waste water is used by a nearby unit as a condition."

M. DWARAKANATH,
 Director, DSTE,
 Puducherry



WHY NO. 1

2%

increase in tree cover, against a negligible growth in other small states.

10 points

Decrease in level of harmful nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) concentration—from 27 ug/m³ in 2008 to 17 ug/m³ in 2012.

Another development is the proposal for a multi-purpose reef with beach nourishment at a cost of Rs 25 crore. Built with an aim to prevent coastal erosion and restore the beach, it will be implemented with financial and technical support from the National Institute of Ocean Technology. Cracking the whip on the increasing use of hazardous plastic, the department has banned the use, sale and storage of disposable cups and plates, and polythene bags measuring 50 microns or below. The

administration also does not allow any new red-category (highly polluting) industries to start or operate.

"The Puducherry Pollution Control Committee is pushing industries to use solar energy by incorporating it as a condition of compliance in its consent order. Industries and hospitals are also made to treat waste water, reuse water for flushing and install solar water heaters," says M. Dwarakanath, director, DSTE.

—*Saranya Chakrapani*

ENVIRONMENT

Industrial Haryana and coastal Puducherry take the top honours in the new category

BIG STATE

STATE	RANK 2015
HARYANA	1
CHHATTISGARH	2
GUJARAT	3
ODISHA	4
PUNJAB	5
ANDHRA PRADESH	6
KARNATAKA	7
TAMIL NADU	8
MAHARASHTRA	9
UTTAR PRADESH	10
HIMACHAL PRADESH	11
JAMMU & KASHMIR	12
MADHYA PRADESH	13
JHARKHAND	14
ASSAM	15
BIHAR	16
TELANGANA	17
KERALA	18
WEST BENGAL	19
RAJASTHAN	20
UTTARAKHAND	21

SMALL STATE

STATE	RANK 2015
PUDUCHERRY	1
MANIPUR	2
ARUNACHAL PRADESH	3
MEGHALAYA	4
SIKKIM	5
NAGALAND	6
TRIPURA	7
MIZORAM	8
DELHI	9
GOA	10



BIG STATE | GUJARAT

FLUSHING OUT OPEN DEFECATION

Soon after Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan on October 2 last year, the Anandiben Patel government began toying with the idea of extending the cleanliness drive to the political arena. The government proposed that panchayat aspirants who didn't have toilets in their homes would not be given tickets. The move was mooted following feedback that open defecation was common in the villages, although many could well afford toilets.

The move to bring a legislation to this effect was, however, dropped since it was found to be too harsh and coercive. Nevertheless, the Chief

Minister has been telling the BJP's women party workers during her tours of villages that availability of toilets in their homes will be one of the criteria for giving tickets in the forthcoming panchayat elections, to be held on November 29. Little wonder, the commitment towards building toilets has been one of Anandiben Patel's most successful missions since she took over the reins from Modi.

And it has been nothing but a huge success. More than 12 lakh toilets have been constructed in Gujarat in the last 15 months. That is 70 per cent of the total number of toilets constructed across the country in this period. Records say 4,64,651 toilets

SHAILESH RAVAL



MORE THAN 12 LAKH
TOILETS BUILT IN THE
LAST 15 MONTHS

SMALL STATE | SIKKIM

ALPINE STATE DELIVERS A CLEAN

Although a cleanliness drive across the border-state was never an easy task, given its geographical challenges, Sikkim got the Nirmal Rajya award from the then UPA government way back in 2008. In fact, its cleanliness drive had begun much before. But it gained momentum after Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan in 2014. Open defecation, thus, is history across the state. Anyone caught defecating in the open is penalised Rs 500 on the spot.

Just over a year after Modi began the cleanliness campaign, almost all villages in Sikkim have been covered under the programme. Nearly 90 percent of Gangtok is part of the initiative. The Gangtok Municipal Corporation (GMC) is spread over



WHY NO.1

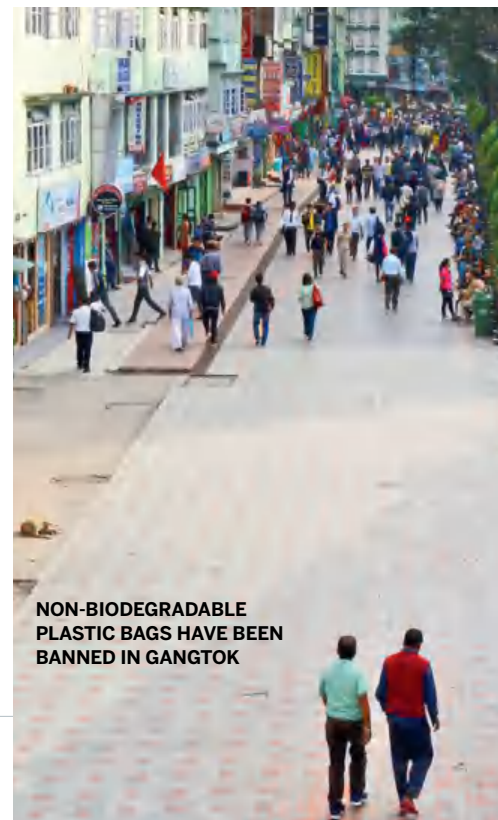
62%

households used clean fuel for cooking in 2013—up from 42% in 2011.

More than 90% success in households with improved sanitation facility and schools having built separate toilet facility for girls.

"The cleanliness drive in Sikkim is like a people's movement now. Their participation is the key."

C.P. DHAKAL
Municipal Commissioner, Gangtok



NON-BIODEGRADABLE
PLASTIC BAGS HAVE BEEN
BANNED IN GANGTOK

Strict monitoring is going on (under the CM) to prevent fudging of (toilet) construction figures."

AJAY BHADOO
Secretary to the CM



WHY NO.1

100%

Individual toilets constructed in 3,088 gram panchayats.

309,575 toilets built in urban Gujarat out of total 464,651 constructed across urban India under Swachh Bharat Mission as of August 2015.

have been constructed under the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan in urban areas across the country until August 2015. Of this, 3,09,575 have been built in Gujarat.

Under Swachh Bharat Mission (rural), 3,088 gram panchayats of Gujarat have reported completion of all individual toilet construction; in all, 8,36,139 individual toilets have been built in rural areas of the state. Nearly 100 per cent construction of toilets have been completed in 24 municipalities and two municipal corporations under

Mahatma Gandhi Swachhata Mission (urban). Besides, 90 per cent work for toilet construction stands completed in 59 municipalities and six municipal corporations. Gujarat also tops the list in solid waste management, having covered 120 of its 195 cities in collecting and disposing of waste as per norms. A system has been laid in place to ensure 100 per cent door-to-door solid waste collection in 1,525 of 1,730 wards of 145 local bodies (out of a total 170).

—Uday Mahurkar

SWEEP



SUBIR HALDER

19.02 sq km and the city has a population of more than 10 lakh. The population goes up by another 60,000 during the tourist season, raising the daily garbage generation of 25 tonnes to 45 tonnes. Accordingly, a team of 105 cleanliness workers, six supervisors and four inspectors are involved in regular cleaning in and around Gangtok. Collection of solid waste from households has been outsourced to NGOs, with GMC managing the rest. The civic body has installed CCTV cameras and the fine for throwing garbage in the open is up to Rs 20,000. Besides making Gangtok a no-smoking zone, the government has also put restrictions on use of plastic bags.

To spread awareness, the government has mobilised all NGOs, taxi drivers, house owners, business people, hoteliers, and school and college students to take part in the cleanliness drive. —Soudhriti Bhabani

CLEANLINESS

Gujarat and Sikkim get pole position on the back of the state governments' strict monitoring of Swachh Abhiyans

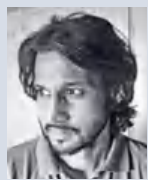
BIG STATE

STATE	RANK 2015
GUJARAT	1
KERALA	2
KARNATAKA	3
HIMACHAL PRADESH	4
JAMMU & KASHMIR	5
MAHARASHTRA	6
WEST BENGAL	7
TELANGANA	8
ANDHRA PRADESH	9
TAMIL NADU	10
ODISHA	11
PUNJAB	12
BIHAR	13
ASSAM	14
RAJASTHAN	15
UTTAR PRADESH	16
HARYANA	17
UTTARAKHAND	18
JHARKHAND	19
CHHATTISGARH	20
MADHYA PRADESH	21

SMALL STATE

STATE	RANK 2015
SIKKIM	1
MEGHALAYA	2
GOA	3
TRIPURA	4
ARUNACHAL PRADESH	5
NAGALAND	6
MIZORAM	7
DELHI	8
PUDUCHERRY	9
MANIPUR	10

GUEST
COLUMN



RAHUL
BHATTACHARYA

PRIDE OF PREJUDICE ON TRACK TO DELHI

Community education during a train journey with a swami-neta

The sun was about to set and the air was cool with oncoming winter. At Madhupur in Jharkhand we boarded the train. We were both travelling to Delhi. The swami wore saffron robes, a saffron turban, *rudraksh* beads, spectacles and a salt-and-pepper beard of medium length.

Half an hour down the line, at Jasidih, we were joined by a retired teacher. The ex-teacher was diabetic, and the swami recommended an ayurvedic remedy, for which the retiree wrote down precise instructions, and very soon we were in the discursive and biographical space of a train conversation.

And what about that Ram Jethmalani, asked the retiree, saying that Ram was a bad husband because he left a pregnant Sita? "He has left Ram!" the swami responded. "Taking Ram's name he has got so far. So who has left whom? Crack *aadmi hai* (He is a crackpot)." It was 2012, *desh mein bura haal* (the country was in a bad state): *dal* was more than Rs 100, potatoes over Rs 30.

Every now and then, like inexplicable tidal waves in the conversational lake of ayurveda's brahma astras and the prices of pulses, the swami invoked Mussalman *qaatils* (killers) and *talwaars* (swords), or aggressive Mussalman breeding, or reeled off names of masjids built over mandirs centuries ago as if it was yesterday. "The Mussalman can never be a nationalist," he declared, a moment before a catering staff entered. On his badge was a Muslim name.

The swami was someone—but who? He ran mutts and educational institutes all across north India: in Mathura, Giridih, Jhansi and other



places, some of these named after Rani Avantibai. "And the unfortunate thing, *bete*, is that I am also involved in politics, though I don't tell people this." He did, however. During the Ram Mandir movement, when the BJP was nothing in Uttar Pradesh and the party was determined that at least Mathura, Ayodhya and Kashi ought to be theirs, he was asked to contest from Mathura and he won; afterwards, Atal Bihari Vajpayee felt he was the only person who could beat Salman Khurshid, and he duly defeated Khurshid from Farrukhabad—twice, and without ever spending money.

"Om," the swami said whenever he belched "*prabhudev daya karo*" after he yawned, and though he sought no blessings when he broke wind, we all went to bed peacefully.

In the morning the swami lay on his side, face resting on hand, and gazed out the window at his Uttar Pradesh. He spoke of the pottery of Khurja, the brassware of Moradabad—adding that those businesses were run by Mussalman *aatankvadi* (terrorists) and dreaming of a time, no doubt, when every man aspired to be *maryada purshottam* and every woman worshipped these men. Near Ghaziabad, when the train slowed down, we helped the retiree on to the tracks with his large suitcase, because it was closer to his son's home than New Delhi, and as soon as he was gone the swami revealed the common household politician in him. "He made a mistake, he shouldn't have got off," he said, having benignly encouraged him all along.

Now that we were alone, I thought I might query the swami further. I reminded him of his point that a Mussalman could never be a nationalist.

"No, he cannot."

By that logic, this was not a country for everyone?

"If this was a country only for Mussalmans there would be only Mussalmans, we would not be able to do anything." The Muslim population at Independence, he claimed, was 5 per cent but now they were about to outnumber the Hindus. "They are moving ahead with a full plan." In Bihar, several districts had a Muslim population

of 90 per cent; a survey in UP showed some 12 districts with over 80.

"Their slogan is, *hum chaar, hamare chaalis* (we four, our forty). Four wives, and by the instructions of God they will give birth to forty children. We are *hum do, hamare do; hum do, hamara ek* (we two, our two; we two, our one)", and then a practised wistfulness. "*Hum do, hamara koi bhi nahi* (We two, and ours nobody)..."

He gathered momentum again. "If we are asked to kill one pigeon, we won't be able to do it. In their Bakr Id, they get the smallest child in the house to cut the goat's neck. When our mothers are feeding their child and the child is crying and refusing to eat, she says, 'Monkey will come for you', and the child gets scared and eats. The Mussalman says, 'Look, monkey has come, go and beat it with a stick.' And the little child goes to beat it."

The bigot on that train has a greater say in national policy and mood than ever before, and every day his bigotry is made a little more legitimate.

Thing led to thing. Once upon a time Hindu children were decapitated because they had refused to accept Islam—until when were we to tolerate this? The Taj Mahal was a Shiv mandir; Delhi's Jama Masjid was a temple too—in 1991 he had issued a public challenge that if it was razed and you did not find Hindu idols he would hang himself. India is an independent country but today only the Mussalman was free. In Mulayam Singh's Uttar Pradesh the Mussalman beat up police and women and nobody could tell him anything; government schemes like the Kanya Vidya Dhan Yojana for Muslim girls were designed to strengthen the Mussalman and weaken the Hindu. Only two organisations in the country protected Hindus, Arya Samaj and the Vishva Hindu Parishad—and *woh aapka* Bal Thackeray (your

Thackeray). We pulled into New Delhi a little late, and there the swami was received by three or four acolytes. One said, "Jai Sakshi Maharaj."

Basic research showed that Sakshi Maharaj is an accused in the Babri demolition of 1992. He was linked to the 1997 murder of Brahm Dutt Dwivedi, a BJP leader close to Vajpayee. When Vajpayee denied him a BJP ticket in 1999, he moved to the Samajwadi Party.

In 2000 Sakshi Maharaj was charged with rape by two of his disciples. In 2006 he was suspended from the Rajya Sabha following a sting operation on corruption in MPLAD funds. Afterwards, he was charged in two cases of fraud related to this.

In April 2013, a few months after I travelled with him, Sakshi Maharaj was charged with conspiring in the murder of Sujata Verma, a former member of the Uttar Pradesh women's commission. And in 2014 he was back in the Lok Sabha, again on a BJP ticket, elected from Unnao.

If I wondered about the ethics of describing a private encounter with a public figure, I needn't have. There is scarcely anything that Sakshi Maharaj says in private that he doesn't in public.

He said madrasas are hubs of terrorism and students are given cash incentives for perpetrating love jihad with Hindus, Sikhs and Jains. He promised a grand Ram mandir in Ayodhya, and death penalty for cow slaughter and religious conversion. In a speech in Meerut he contended, "The concept of four wives and 40 children will not work in India and the time has come when a Hindu woman must produce at least four children in order to protect Hindu religion." There is something to be said for Sakshi Maharaj's consistency but all it means is that the bigot one encounters on a train is not a mere bigot on the train. The bigot on the train has a greater say in national policy and mood than ever before, and every day his bigotry is made a little more legitimate.

The writer is the author of The Sly Company of People Who Care



STORM CLOUDS OVER THE

The Akali Dal is losing the plot in Punjab—its stand on growing extremism has become slippery, public trust is waning and the number of disgruntled senior leaders is soaring

By Asit Jolly

He literally pulled a rabbit out of his turban. Former Union social welfare minister Balwant Singh Ramoowalia's unexpected appearance in Lucknow, smugly seated among five new cabinet ministers inducted into Akhilesh Yadav's government on October 31, completely rattled the ruling Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) in Punjab. The timing couldn't have been worse. The party's leadership—Chief Minister Parkash Singh Badal and his son and deputy CM Sukhbir Badal—has been struggling to contain spreading resentment and a rapidly snowballing deficit of public trust across Punjab. Although driven by personal disgruntlement over being sidelined within the party, Ramoowalia's exit, preceded by raucous demonstrations by farmers and devout Sikhs, sharply accentuates the

Badals' slackening hold in what used to be an unquestioned 'home turf'.

Consider the street-side view across Punjab over the past month: thousands of slogan-shouting Sikhs blocking highways, sporadic instances of violence, unsheathed *kirpans* (swords) and the odd Khalistan banner popping up amid the demonstrations, police personnel and armed-to-the-teeth paramilitary soldiers staging flag marches. The scene had despairingly begun to resemble the troubled 1980s.

Angry demonstrations began on October 7 with farmers protesting against the state government's failure to compensate widespread damage to the cotton crop from whitefly attacks. This, amid allegations that SAD ministers had colluded with corrupt agriculture department officials to supply spurious pesticides. Giving credence to the charge, police arrested a senior agriculture department official and raided several dealers to recover fake

pesticides. While the peasants voluntarily scaled down their agitation, the lull was short-lived. Reports about the desecration of the Sikh holy scripture—Guru Granth Sahib—in Bargari village in Faridkot district on October 12 immediately brought back long-simmering public resentment to the fore.

Outraged Sikhs, who make for close to 60 per cent of Punjab's population, spilled onto the streets against what they saw as the incumbent SAD-BJP government's reluctance to act against the culprits. Many protesters seemed to believe that the SAD leadership was complicit in this and nearly a dozen other acts of similar desecration that are being reported from across Punjab.

Much of the anger seemed prompted by a controversial religious edict issued on September 24 by the Akal Takht—the apex temporal and religious seat of the Sikh community. The edict sought to 'pardon' Gurmeet Ram Rahim Singh, head of the Sirsa-based



BADALS

PRABHJOT GILL

POLICE AT THE SITE OF A PROTEST IN KOTKAPURA OF FARIDKOT DISTRICT IN PUNJAB

Dera Sacha Sauda sect, against whom it had decreed a “social and religious boycott” in 2007. The action against the Dera chief was prompted by allegations that he had attempted to imitate Guru Gobind Singh.

Given the severity of Sikh sentiment against him, the decision to ‘pardon’ the Dera chief smacked of political naivety. The buzz on the street was that the edict was pushed through by Sukhbir Badal as part of a ‘deal’ to ensure the Dera’s support in the 2017 assembly elections. However, amid intense public pressure, the Akal Takht revoked the pardon granted to the Dera chief on October 16.

It did not end there. On October 21, Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC) chief Avtar Makkar suspended the *Panj Pyare*—the Guru’s chosen five responsible for ceremonial baptism of Sikhs—after they summoned Akal Takht Jathedar Gurbachan Singh and the four other Sikh high priests to explain themselves for ‘pardoning’ the

Dera chief. Just two days on, facing flak from devotees, Makkar was forced to reinstate the *Panj Pyare*.

Many of those protesting are convinced that the instances of sacrilege are motivated by politics. Supported avidly by separatist Sikh factions and spearheaded by previously unknown religious preachers such as Panthpreet Singh, Ranjit Singh Dhadrianwale and Daler Singh Kheriwale, the current campaign is not just demanding replacement of the high priests and SGPC bosses but also looking to topple the Badals themselves. Analysts say the quickening cycles of protests point to a “leadership crisis” that is acutely pronounced in the ruling SAD, which is into its ninth year in office.

Pramod Kumar, political commentator and director of the Chandigarh-based Institute for Development and Communication, attributes the protests to accumulating public frustration. Much of this, he says, comes from perceptions that the ruling elites—in this instance the Badal family and its cohorts—have appropriated

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everything from political power to economic wealth and influence over Sikh religious institutions in the state.

Kumar says people's distrust of the ruling establishment has made it easy for hitherto marginalised radical Sikh groups and peasant organisations to channellise public anger against the government. Former Punjab Police chief KPS Gill too sees "social, political and economic mismanagement, and endemic corruption" as key to the recurrent, often violent, protests.

The SAD under the Badals has significantly contributed to what Gill describes as "a growing fundamentalism and an atmosphere of radicalisation and politicisation of the (Sikh) faith". In a panic after a poor showing in the Lok Sabha elections and obvious attempts by the Narendra Modi-led BJP to expand its influence in Punjab, the party that had tom-tommed an agenda of "good governance and development" rapidly regressed into deploying its panthic or religion card.

The SAD embarked on a questionable policy of trying to appropriate the radical agenda in seeking remissions for jailed Khalistanis such as Devinder Pal Bhullar and Balwant Rajoana, among nearly a dozen other convicted terrorists. It also resurrected shades of the Anandpur Sahib Resolution—widely viewed as the spark that ignited the Khalistan Movement—in reviving demands for the transfer of Chandigarh to Punjab.

"The Badals tried hard to rebuild bridges with their traditional, devout Sikh support base by invoking religious symbolism and adopting a soft stance towards radical groups," says Kumar. But predictably, it has gone horribly wrong. "This is the first time that large sections of Sikhs have turned against the party," admits a senior SAD leader, apprehensive of the impact such alienation could have on the party's prospects in the 2017 assembly polls.

Grim-faced through the crisis, Sukhbir Badal insists that the present turmoil is a "temporary law and order situation". Rather than trying to address the issues, the Badals are trying to quell the unrest through

cosmetic interventions.

On November 1, the Chief Minister ordered the transfer of investigation into the initial desecration incident at Bargari to the CBI. This came after earlier 'gestures', including the sacking of DGP Sumedh Saini and registration of a murder case in the October 14 police firing in Behbal Kalan village of Faridkot in which two people were killed, failed to mollify protesters.

The Badal government's reluc-

videos depicting demonstrators abusing politicians, exhorting people to take to the streets, or simply purveying rumours.

Punjab's BJP leaders, however, have remained conspicuously quiet. Wishing to distance themselves from any political fallout, the BJP's core committee, which met on October 20, while calling for "exemplary punishment" to the culprits in the sacrilege incident, also made it a point to high-

PUNJAB CM PARKASH SINGH BADAL (LEFT) WITH SON AND DEPUTY CM SUKHBIR



CHANDRADEEP KUMAR

“THE PARTY IS BEING UNFAIRLY TARGETED. WE WILL GO BACK TO THE PEOPLE AND PRESENT OUR CASE.”

Parkash Singh Badal Chief Minister, Punjab

tance, or perhaps incapacity, to take a clear stand against hard-line outfits could strengthen them further. Kumar warns that it could end in a deeper polarisation eventually creating conditions similar to those that nurtured Khalistani terrorism in the 1980s.

A "foreign hand", indicating a planned and coordinated conspiracy by Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence and extremist elements within the Sikh diaspora, is already discernible. A flood of dubious posts on social media networks by radicalised Sikh expatriates have been uploaded and shared furiously. These include

light "the failure of the administration (read SAD leadership) to act in time".

The opposition Congress and the Aam Aadmi Party have displayed no such reticence. The way things appear, the SAD, besides a loss of face, could end up suffering unprecedented reverses in the 2017 polls. Visibly worried, CM Badal insists that his party is being "unfairly" targeted. "We will go back to the people and present our case," Badal told INDIA TODAY on November 4, also revealing that he will spend all of December addressing *sadbhavana* rallies across Punjab.

Follow the writer on Twitter @Asitjolly

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FOR MANAGING TOMORROW

SPECIAL REPORT **NEPAL**



MADHESI PROTESTORS THROW STONES AND BRICKS AT POLICEMEN IN BIRGUNJ, NEPAL

CRISIS OVER CONSTITUENCY HOW THE PROTESTS AGAINST THE HIMALAYAN NATION'S FIRST

SEPTEMBER 20

Nepal adopts its first democratic constitution days after India's Foreign Secretary S. Jaishankar urges a "full consensus" before its unveiling, implying that the Madhesis are not on board.

SEPTEMBER 22

New Delhi expresses concern at the violence in the Terai, says it has "repeatedly cautioned" Nepal to take "urgent step to defuse the tension in these regions".

SEPTEMBER 27

Nepal's ex-PM Baburam Bhattarai resigns, voicing concern over the Madhesis "being denied a say" in the constitution he had earlier endorsed.

SEPTEMBER 30

India's ambassador to Nepal Ranjit Rae says there is no blockade by India at Birgunj or elsewhere along the India-Nepal border.



TROUBLED TRANSITION

As Kathmandu hardens its stand against Madhesis and Delhi, protests threaten Nepal's nascent democracy

By Jyoti Malhotra in Birgunj, Nepal

Jai Madhes!

In the dead of night with only the stars for company, that slogan is a greeting on the mobile phone on the Bhattamohr-Janakpur open border between India and Nepal. By the time you reach Birgunj further west, the catchphrase has been transformed into a war cry of scrawny young men fighting a pitched battle with stones against Nepal's armed police, or simply squatting and protesting with raised fists on the Friendship Bridge that connects with Raxaul in Bihar.

Jai Madhes is a slogan strung along the 1,800 km length of Nepal's underbelly, the Terai, giving fair warning to the country's newly elected prime minister, K.P. Oli, that a Molotov cocktail of unmet demands and ethnic discrimination is nigh.

In the early hours of November 2, that rising tide of anger and

resentment threatened to take on a new meaning as policemen swooped on some Madhesis—people of Indian origin who had settled in the “middle ground” between India and Nepal a couple of hundred years ago—sleeping on the Friendship Bridge. They beat them up with batons and burnt their tents. As the protestors ran helter-skelter, leaving behind their mobile phones and a few belongings, the truth dawned on the Terai: their protest had entered its 80th day and Kathmandu seemed determined to break it up.

But the ugliness of the day was only beginning. Later that afternoon, an infuriated Nepali policeman caught hold of a young man passing by the enormous Shankaracharya Gate just short of the Friendship Bridge. Ashish Ram, from Darbhanga in Bihar, had come to meet his mother's family in Birgunj—marriages between people from the north Bihar region called Mithilanchal and the Madhesis are common. That afternoon, the 19-year-old was returning home to Raxaul.

CONSTITUTION BLEW UP TO BECOME A LIFE-AND-DEATH ISSUE FOR THE NEW DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC

OCTOBER 4

Nepal's cabinet decides to table an amendment proposal that addresses two demands of the protesters on inclusion and political representation.

OCTOBER 9

India says blockade on the border and resultant fuel crisis is prompted by a section of the Nepalis.

OCTOBER 16

On eve of Dussehra, newly elected PM K.P. Sharma Oli says he is confident of finding a solution to the blockade crisis. Says deputy PM Kamal Thapa will soon visit India.

NOVEMBER 2

An Indian is killed in Nepal violence. PM Narendra Modi demands an inquiry. Oli says keep off, accuses India of “propping up” the Madhes-based political parties.

WHY THE TURMOIL

The demands of the Madhesis:

- 1 Demand for affirmative action on basis of population, meaning, Madhesis should get jobs in higher civil services, bureaucracy and police, according to their population strength.
- 2 Demand for political representation based on population, not geography. Want about 20 more directly elected seats for Terai from current 60-65 in 275-member lower house of parliament.
- 3 Demand for redrawing federal provinces in the Terai to reflect Madhesi population.
- 4 Restore "roti-beti" relationship between Madhes and Mithilanchal in Bihar.

RANJAN RAHI



TRUCKS STUCK DUE TO A BLOCKADE AT THE INDIA-NEPAL BORDER IN RAXAUL

As trucks carrying petrol, LPG or other commodities line up at the border, Nepal's tottering ec

Sanjay Yadav, an Indian trucker waiting to cross back, was a few feet away from the incident. "The boy was not a protestor. He was just walking towards the bridge when this Nepali policeman simply pulled him and shot him at point-blank range," Yadav says.

As the tension grew in Birgunj, groups of young men emerged from their homes and began to burn tyres and block the city's main arteries. Incidents of stone-pelting continued until late into the afternoon. An indefinite curfew was soon declared. By dusk, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had called Oli, demanding an inquiry into Ram's death. Within 24 hours, Oli was warning India to mind its own business, telling a public gathering that India was meddling in Nepal's "internal affairs" and "propping up" Madhesi parties.

"India wants a resolution of all Nepal's internal problems through dialogue and mutual consultation. Nepal should stop blaming India because she herself is responsible for her suffering," Anju Ranjan, India's consul-general in Birgunj, told INDIA TODAY.

The irony is that the last time India had intervened in Nepal's internal affairs was in 2006, when New Delhi supported Nepal's democratic parties, including Oli's Communist Party of Nepal-UML faction, to overthrow the monarchy. In the 19-day "*jan andolan*", or people's revolution, that ensued, India preemptively told then King Gyanendra that it had no option but to relinquish his throne and pave the way for a republican Nepal. Oli had then cheered from the sidelines.

Less than a decade later, India and Nepal have returned to having a right, royal spat. Kathmandu's elite, both inside and outside the government, seem to be supporting the recently passed Constitution that discriminates against the people of the "Madhes".

According to Nepal's Constitution, the delimitation of constituencies seriously disfavours the Terai. That is because delimitation has been done on the basis of geography, not on population. So if, say, about 5,000 people make up one hill constituency, it takes about 1 lakh people in the Terai to make up a constituency. Second, the

Madhesis also decry the lack of affirmative action, arguing that the police or the government bureaucracy are dominated by the "hill upper castes", the Brahmins and the Chhetris, while the Madhesis occupy 1-2 per cent of jobs in these sectors. A third demand relating to the reorganisation of provinces in the Terai is also on the agenda.

Upendra Yadav, chairman of the Madhesi Jana Adhikar Forum, says, "The Pahar (the hill region) has internally colonised the Terai. It is hardly better than what the monarchs once did, or even before them, the East India Company."

Yadav is referring to the 1816 Treaty of Sugauli, according to which Nepal was deliberately partitioned by the East India Company and forced to part with several of its fertile lowlands. Some parts were later returned to Nepal in 1860 in gratitude to the Gorkhas for helping suppress India's first war of independence in 1857. But as rulers rose and fell, and with them lands changed possession, the

REUTERS



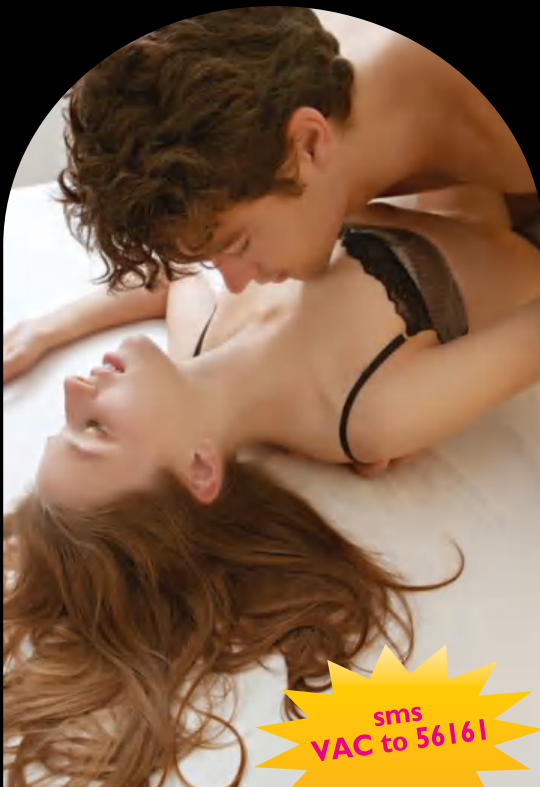
NEPALI TANKERS
HEADING TO KERUNG
FOR OIL SUPPLY
FROM CHINA

conomy is taking a hit. It is now exploring the 'China angle'.

“roti-beti” relationship between the people of the Madhes and Mithilanchal remained unchanged.

Nepal's new Constitution has now made sweeping changes to this age-old custom between the two regions, insisting that Indian women marrying into the Madhes will be treated on par with other foreigners. Earlier, Indian women marrying Madhesi men could relinquish Indian citizenship and take their husband's citizenship along with jobs in the country. Popular support to the political campaign is primarily based on the destruction of this ancient tie. Nearly 75 per cent of the Madhes has relatives in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, says Naresh Prasad Singh, president of the Janakpur Red Cross, whose wife is from Sitamarhi.

With the protests shutting down the Raxaul-Burgunj crossing, which means that trucks carrying essential commodities, petrol and fuel are waiting in long queues on the Indian side of the border, the economy



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of land-locked Nepal is in steep fall. According to Shiv Shankar Shah, president, Janakpur Chamber of Commerce, the earthquake in April is said to have knocked Rs 60,000 crore off the economy. The ongoing protest is sure to break its back.

"The Terai is the backbone of Nepal's economy. About 77 per cent of its industry is based here. Suffering a huge economic setback, it will take decades for Nepal to get back on its feet," says Shah. With schools shut across the Terai, Arun Kumar Karn, a science teacher at Janakpur's Sankat Mochan School, is a worried man. "Matric exams are supposed to take place soon. We hope our children won't lose a year," Karn said.

So far, although, Kathmandu is determined not to blink. An infuriated Oli ordered a global tender to supply petrol to Nepal, in an effort to break what he believes is an "India-sponsored" blockade in Birgunj. Several Chinese companies applied but their quotes turned out to be more than double of what Indian companies quoted. China has since given a grant of 1,000 metric tonnes of petrol but that is expected to last only a few days.

Indian diplomats refused to comment on Kathmandu's feeble attempt to play its "China card", but Madhesi protestors are not so circumspect. "We have family ties with India, doesn't the Pahar understand that? The government is showing its true anti-Indian feelings by turning to China, but we understand the game Oli is playing," protestors at Birgunj said.

Certainly, Kathmandu is resorting to an old game, as it attempts to play off India's age-old relationship with the Madhes with traditional rival China. But Beijing is also keenly aware that it cannot over-reach itself in Nepal and certainly not replace India in the Terai. An unspoken understanding between Delhi and Beijing about India's geographical, emotional, political and familial ties with Nepal means that Beijing is unlikely to do anything that disturbs this primary relationship between India and Nepal.

But Madhesi leaders say the

WHAT MADHESI LEADERS SAY

Belligerent leaders ensure protests will carry on

"IT IS FOOLISH TO SAY INDIA HAS IMPOSED THE BLOCKADE, WE HAVE BLOCKED THE BORDER. PEOPLE ARE FIGHTING; IMPORT FROM THIS OR THAT COUNTRY DOES NOT MATTER."

UPENDRA YADAV

Chairman, Madhesi Jana Adhikar Forum



"THE PROTESTS SHOULD NOT BE STOPPED. WE HAVE TO TAKE IT TO A MORE DECISIVE LEVEL. OUR PROTESTS WILL CONTINUE UNTIL WE GET WHAT WE DESERVE."

RAJENDRA MAHATO

President, Nepal Sadbhavana Party



Terai is poised for greater fracturing if Kathmandu insists on playing its political games. Yadav of the Madhesi forum has discouraged protestors from burning Chinese flags in the Terai, warning that this is a slippery slope. "This is not the way to show *bhakti* towards India. China has no interest in the Terai, they believe the Madhes is almost a part of India. We have to be pro-Madhes, which means we have to be pro-Nepal," Yadav said.

Rajendra Mahato, president of Nepal Sadbhavana Party, added, "The Jai Madhes movement is akin to the Jai Bangla movement that Bangladeshis adopted in 1971, as it separated from Pakistan. If Kathmandu isn't careful, the Madhes could be headed that way."

India's own policy of maintaining a distance but watching closely is the only way out, Madhesi leaders admit. India's enormous stakes in keeping the 1,800 km-long open border peaceful

has meant that the Ministry of External Affairs has issued several statements of concern. But even India was caught off-guard when the protests suddenly snowballed three months ago, with National Security Advisor Ajit Doval and Foreign Secretary S. Jaishankar competing in finding the right solution that PM Narendra Modi should adopt towards Nepal.

After these initial hiccups, though, India's policy seems to have stabilised. When Nepal's pro-royal deputy Prime Minister Kamal Thapa visited India recently, he seemed almost exclusively interested in reopening the blocked Birgunj crossing and exhorted Delhi to persuade the Madhesi protestors to call off their protests. But External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj reminded him that "substantial dialogue with the Madhes is the only answer", pointing out that the "roti-beti" relationship across the undemarcated border meant that India would never do anything to harm Nepal.

Both Thapa and Oli have remained unmoved. Talks with Madhesi leaders have gone nowhere. Mahato, who was prevented from entering Birgunj after the November 2 incidents, said there was no option but for India to keep up the "political pressure on Nepal. The world must know how the Madhes is being discriminated against". Yadav pointed out that India should "definitely support our movement as we are people of Indian origin, and we are being beaten up everyday. Otherwise, what is the point of India saying that it is a strong regional power?"

The turmoil in the Terai doesn't look like it will recede anytime soon. With 44 Madhesi and eight Nepali policemen killed in the protest so far, things are expected to only get worse before they get better. The easy way out would be for Kathmandu to recognise that the Madhesi are being treated unequally and it is time to redress their problems, both by amending the Constitution and starting talks to ameliorate their condition. Allowing the Terai to burn much longer is a frightening thought that all sensible heads in Kathmandu and the Madhes must immediately dismiss.

Follow the writer on Twitter @jomalhotra

TOO LITTLE, TOO LATE

To offset the burden of an ageing population, China's 'one-child policy' comes to an end. But the news has brought neither relief nor excitement to the people.



GETTY IMAGES

By Ananth Krishnan

For Xu Jie and his wife Sun, a middle-class Shanghai couple, having a second child had never crossed their minds. Millions of Chinese couples, like the Xu family, have grown up with a simple dictum hammered into their heads: two is too many.

That was until October 29. That day, the Communist Party of China (CPC) laid to rest a policy that has dominated the lives of Chinese for more than three decades. The 'one-child policy' was first introduced in 1980 by then leader Deng Xiaoping. Taking over a weak economy and uncertain country grappling with the death of Mao Zedong, Deng and his planners enforced a sweeping, stringent system of family planning that would penalise families that had more than one child.

For three decades, the policy has been much debated, in China and abroad. Its advocates in the Chinese government say the policy has spared China an additional 400 million births it could not have afforded to bear. Yet what was perhaps the single-biggest population experiment in human history also brought enormous costs: forcing Chinese women and men to give up children and undergo forced abortions, and leaving an entire generation to grow up without brothers or sisters, the costs of which are only now being counted by Chinese sociologists.

More than that, critics say the draconian population intervention by China's planners was simply unnecessary. Chinese demographers say that history has shown that the biggest contraceptive has been neither forced sterilisation campaigns nor financial penalties but economic development, borne out in the declining fertility rates of developed economies from Europe to Japan and South Korea, and evident in India as well.

At the end of last year, China's elderly population—those above the age of 60—crossed 212 million. That number will more than double in the next four decades, accounting for more than one-third of the Chinese

CRITICS SAY THE ONE-CHILD POLICY BY CHINA'S PLANNERS WAS UNNECESSARY

NO CHILD'S PLAY

China's draconian one-child policy has created an imbalance in population development

1953

China passes first law on contraception and abortion.

1958-62

Mao Zedong launches 'Great Leap Forward', triggering famine claiming 30 million lives.

1964

As population growth recovers, State Council or cabinet sets up Birth Planning Commission.

1971

State Council targets reducing population growth from 2.5% to 1.5% in five years.

1975

Mao launches campaign to reduce population growth to 1% in rural areas and 0.6% in cities by 1980.

population—a higher percentage, by some estimates, than anywhere else in the world. While the sharp rise in life expectancy on account of improved medical care has certainly boosted the elderly population, the one-child policy hastened the process. The official announcement on October 29 acknowledged that the aim of ending the one-child policy was to “balance population development” and “offset the burden of an ageing population”. The government calculates that 90 million Chinese families, like Xu's in Shanghai, will qualify under the new rules, potentially raising the 1.37 billion population to 1.45 billion by 2030.

MUTED RESPONSE

For many families like Xu's, the October announcement was greeted with neither relief nor excitement but with a shrug. The Xus say they won't have a second child even if they can: in Shanghai, China's most expensive city, rearing their first-born has stretched their family budget to the limit. Although public schooling is free for nine years, upwardly mobile Chinese families like Xu's spare no expense in sending their children to expensive private English tutors and prep classes to get them into Harvard or Yale. One recent survey in Shanghai found only 15 per cent of married women would choose to have a second child, while a national poll of 170,000 people found that 43 per cent had no interest in taking advantage of the new rules. Which is why the October 29 announcement, whose enforcement will begin when China's Parliament meets in March, was received soberly in China.

SUCCESS OR DISASTER?

Right from the 1950s, China's Communist planners experimented with numerous ways to control the

CHILDREN ATTEND CLASSES AT A PRIMARY SCHOOL IN CHINA'S HUNAN PROVINCE



AFP

A NATIONAL POLL OF 170,000 PEOPLE FOUND THAT 43% HAD NO INTEREST IN TAKING ADVANTAGE OF THE TWO-CHILD POLICY.

growth of the Chinese population. In the first decade of the republic, Mao launched a campaign encouraging Chinese to do their patriotic duty by having as many children as possible to build a new nation. When Mao initiated the misguided 'Great Leap Forward' of 1958 with the aim of replicating Soviet modernisation, he was confident that China's output would increase so rapidly that the country would never have to worry about its population. That project ended in a disaster, leading to a collapse of the agricultural economy and famine claiming 30 million lives.

China under Mao launched its first major family planning campaign in the early 1970s, targeting reducing a 2.5

per cent growth rate to 1 per cent in just five years. Mao promoted what he called a “later, longer, fewer” (wan, xi, shao) policy, encouraging women to marry late, introduce a greater interval between births and have no more than two children in cities and three in the countryside.

This programme marked the start of a family planning system that involved mass campaigns and imposition of heavy fines on those that broke the rules. The 1970s saw mass contraception campaigns as well as forced sterilisation. In 1971 alone, the number of female sterilisation operations almost doubled from 1.7 million to 3 million. With draconian enforcement,

1979

State Council plans implementing mandatory one-child policy with penalties for violators.

1980

Under new leader Deng Xiaoping, one-child policy begins to be implemented.

1984

With fertility rates falling, policy relaxed to allow rural families second child if first born is a girl.

2007

In cities, couples allowed to have second child if both parents are only children.

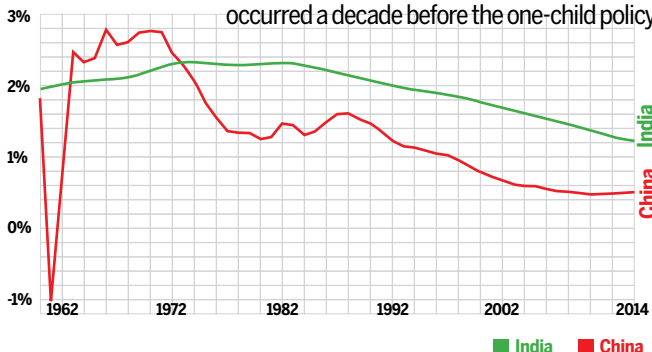
2013

As workforce shrinks, two children allowed for families in which either parent is only child.

2015

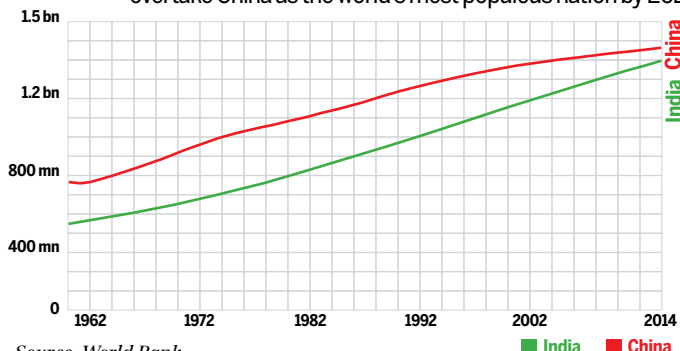
One-child policy scrapped. All Chinese couples allowed to have two children.

Population growth rate The biggest drop in China's population growth rate occurred a decade before the one-child policy was adopted



EFFECT OF THE ONE CHILD POLICY

Population At current population growth rates, India is forecast to overtake China as the world's most populous nation by 2022



Source: World Bank

INDIA'S POPULATION CONVERGING WITH CHINA

the fertility rate—the estimated average number of children a woman can have—plummeted from 6 to 2.8 in a decade, never before seen in history.

IN THE NAME OF POLICY

It's often forgotten that China's biggest population drop happened a decade before the one-child policy was even implemented. The one-child policy introduced by Deng had an even harsher system of enforcement. In one year alone, 1983, 14.4 million abortions and 20.7 million sterilisations, most forced, were performed.

The Chinese government says the policy—despite widespread rights violations—was undoubtedly successful,

saving China the burden of 400 million additional births and laying the foundation for its economic revival. Yet that verdict is being increasingly questioned in China. Beyond the legacy of a rapidly ageing society, even the claim of 400 million births has been doubted. Demographers say that figure was arrived at using unrealistic algorithms that do not factor in the declines seen in other countries on account of economic development. A paper published this year by demographers Wang Feng, Yong Cai and Martin Whyte in the Australian National University's *China Journal* argued that “it is a damning indictment of the Chinese record that all of

her Confucian neighbours in East Asia achieved rapid declines to their present sub-replacement fertility rates via robust economic growth supplemented by voluntary birth planning campaigns, thus avoiding the massive abuses that China's misguided launching of the one-child programme produced.”

Beyond the statistics, the one-child policy has also left for Chinese families unspeakable traumatic legacies: families that were forced to undergo abortions or to see their “illegitimate” children unable to register in government schools or receive healthcare in hospitals. Forced abortions, although illegal, were practiced widely, especially in rural counties, after Deng decreed that meeting population targets was a key factor in determining the promotion of local officials.

That the government can still decree how many children Chinese can have—even if that number has now doubled—means that the end of the one-child policy “is no reason for us to cheer”, wrote Song Shinan, a writer who has frequently criticised family planning regulations. “The party,” he wrote in a widely circulated October essay, “still controls the gun”, punning on Mao's famous dictum that “Power comes from the barrel of a gun” and a Chinese word for gun that is also used to refer to male anatomy. Song points out that while global headlines cheered the end of China's one-child policy, Chinese state media phrased the announcement rather differently. Instead, they announced the start of a new ‘two-child policy’, reminding Chinese couples that family planning—with all its regulations and punishments—wasn't going anywhere just yet.

Follow the writer on Twitter @ananthkrishnan

By Shadab Nazmi

Be happy, be beautiful, and be good. Follow your dreams, no matter what they are. Education is important, college isn't. This was just some of the advice the audience took home after an energetic and inspirational India Today Mind Rocks Youth Summit held at Delhi's Siri Fort Auditorium on October 31. There was thunderous clapping, incessant tapping of feet and, of course, valuable messages served on board. All thanks to achievers, ranging from film, sport, politics and business, who didn't just groove with the audience but also shared their mantra of reaching the top.

Ritesh Agarwal was just 21 when he became the CEO of OYO Rooms, an online hotel aggregator. And yes, he is also on the list of college drop-outs who have become successful entrepreneurs. When asked how he became successful so soon, he said, "Don't go to college, it's a waste of time." As the crowd roared, he added, "Education is important but college isn't. And if you are thinking of a start-up, don't stay with your family."

Talking of success and glamour at a young age, Sofia Ashraf, whose song pitch-forked the issue of mercury poisoning in Kodaikanal, Tamil Nadu, highlighted how today's audience is receptive to art with a social message. "I couldn't sing but wanted to, so I became a rapper," she said. Ashraf added that she is working on a song about mental illness next.

Another example of the power of youth is internet freedom crusader Shreya Singhal, whose petition in the Supreme Court led to the striking down of Section 66A of the IT Act. "Internet is a new medium that needs to be defended." Referring to the government's intervention in freedom of speech and expression over the Web, she said that there are enough laws to regulate misuse of freedom and there was no need for an internet-specific law, only better implementation.

As for Congress MP Jyotiraditya Scindia and Minister of State for Home Kiren Rijiju's political duet, the



SUCCESS SUTRAS



youngsters expected a rather preachy and pedantic session. But to their surprise, the political rivals made an entry to the stage with a who-can-do-more-push-ups contest. The enthralled audience clapped, screamed and cheered for both. During the debate, Scindia related several instances of irresponsible behaviour on the part of cabinet ministers: a statement by a minister that the Dadri violence was “an accident”; the same minister saying APJ Kalam contributed immensely to the nation “despite being a Muslim”; and another minister saying girls going out after dark isn’t part of Indian culture. “Freedom of choice and secularism are central to our idea of nationhood,” he said, demanding action against the ministers. To which Rijiju responded, “The Congress ruled for 58 years. We have just taken charge for 15 months. Give us time.”

In the opening session the air was suddenly filled with magic and love.

‘Dooba Dooba’ singer Mohit Chauhan took youngsters on a tumultuous ride of joy and laughter with his latest song ‘Matargashti’ from the film *Tamasha*. “Music has no boundaries,” said Chauhan. Though he was disheartened to hear about the cancellation of his favourite ghazal singer Ghulam Ali’s concert in Mumbai, he highlighted how music is unstoppable.

Looking every bit a style icon, actor Sonam Kapoor too shared a few words of wisdom. “If you do the right things, nothing will bring you down,” she said talking of her success in the industry. Quizzed why she’d rather not flip for bachelor boy Salman Khan, her co-star in the forthcoming movie *Prem Ratan Dhan Payo*, Sonam said she finds him hot, but she’s more of a Salman fan girl. She signed off in style by shaking a leg with the audience on the hit song ‘Masakali’.

While most offered lessons on how to be successful, Papon credited his

“CHOOSE THINGS THAT OTHERS MIGHT NOT. YOU COULD FAIL, OF COURSE. BE PREPARED FOR THAT.”
RANDEEP HOODA
 Actor

“I DIDN’T LIKE MY NAME KRISHNA, SO I STARTED CALLING MYSELF NAINA. AND MY MOM HAD NO PROBLEM WITH THAT.”

NAINA SINGH
 Student

An evening of fun, glamour and learning. The sixth Mind Rocks Summit brought together newsmakers of today with the makers of tomorrow.





"I LEARNED MUSIC FROM THE INTERNET. I HAD NO GURU. GOOGLE HAS ALL THE ANSWERS I NEED."

ARJUN KANUNGO

Musician



"I WAS LUCKY TO HAVE BEEN THE FIRST PERSON TO FILE THE PLEA. IF NOT ME, THERE WOULD HAVE BEEN SOMEONE ELSE."

SHREYA SINGHAL

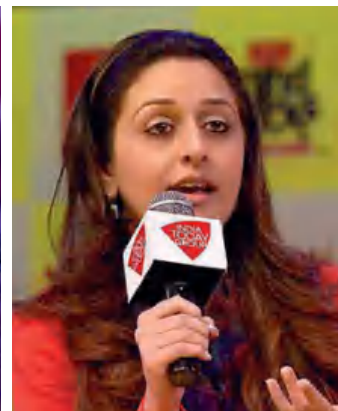
Law student



"THE YOUTH OF TODAY ARE RECEPTIVE TO SONGS THAT PUSH A CAUSE."

SOFIA ASHRAF

Rapper



"EMPATHY WITH THE USER IS GOING TO BE CRITICAL GOING FORWARD."

RADHA KAPOOR

Entrepreneur



MINISTER OF STATE FOR HOME KIREN RIJJU AND CONGRESS MP JYOTIRADITYA SCINDIA TRY TO OUT-EXERCISE EACH OTHER AT THE YOUTH SUMMIT



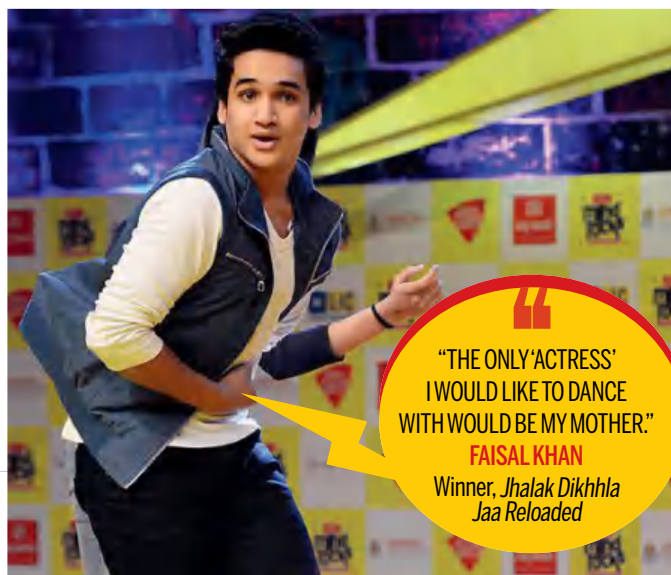
"I DON'T NEED A PR AGENCY. MY SONGS ARE SHIPS THAT SAIL FAR AND WIDE."

MOHIT CHAUHAN

Singer



RAPPER BADSHAH PERFORMING ONE OF HIS HIT SONGS



"THE ONLY 'ACTRESS' I WOULD LIKE TO DANCE WITH WOULD BE MY MOTHER."

FAISAL KHAN

Winner, Jhalak Dikhhla Jaa Reloaded



“YOU CAN’T COMPARE TALENT. WHAT IS IMPORTANT IS HOW YOU REACT TO DIFFERENT SITUATIONS WITH YOUR TALENT.”

ANIL KUMBLE
Cricketer

TAP TO WATCH VIDEO



PAPON MESMERISED THE AUDIENCE WITH BOLLYWOOD AND ASSAMESE BIHU SONGS

“I WAS NEVER FUNNY, PEOPLE AROUND ME WERE, THAT MADE ME A COMEDIAN.”

BISWA KALYAN RATH
Stand-up comedian



father for his success. “I am best at what I am. I can’t be John Mayer, but I can try to make what I do go global,” the singer said. Young achievers from different fields impressed upon the importance of thinking out of the box and following their creative instincts. Musician Arjun Kanungo, known for his song ‘Baaki Baatein’, spoke about how he learnt music on his own, surfing the internet. He said, “Google has all the answers.”

Student of the Year Sidharth Malhotra’s take on perseverance inspired many in the audience. “During college, I was rejected multiple times as a model... Break the mould, have a voice and vision to achieve your dreams,” the actor said. His relationship status with Alia Bhatt remained a mystery but he left the stage with a promise that he would come back to “apni Dilli”.



“I’M NOT IN LOVE, UNFORTUNATELY. BUT I’M A COMPLETE ROMANTIC AT HEART.”

SONAM KAPOOR
Actor

Be it the Haryanvi accent of *Mein Aur Charles* actor Randeep Hooda, the comedy rush of stand-up comedian Biswa Kalyan Rath or an insightful conversation with legendary cricketer Anil Kumble, Mind Rocks emerged as a great experience for youngsters to watch and interact with their iconic stars.

The event ended on a high note with rapper Badshah performing his hits ‘DJ Wale Babu’ and ‘Abhi Toh Party Shuru Hui Hai’. “I went to my father and said I want to become a rapper. He just slapped me,” said Badshah reminiscing about how hard it was to stick to his goal. “Everyone has a dream, I also had one. Follow your dream no matter what it is.”

Follow the writer on Twitter @shadabnazmi

For full report, go to www.indiatoday.in/mindrocks



KIRAN NADAR STANDS INSIDE A
HEMA UPADHYAY INSTALLATION
AT THE KNMA IN SAKET, DELHI



THE GRANDE DAME OF ART

Ace collector Kiran Nadar has set her eyes on F.N. Souza, and a plot of land for her third, and most expansive, museum yet

| By Gayatri Jayaraman |

You can be sure she's playing for the Grand Slam. So though Kiran Nadar may have just crashed out in the quarter-finals of the world bridge championships in Chennai this October, make no mistake, picking tricks is all in a day's play for her. If she broke the record for F.N. Souza's 'Birth', picking it up for \$3.5 million (approximately Rs 22.75 crore) this summer, buying it from Tina Ambani at Christie's auction in New York, it was much more than a whimsical exchange of hands between industrialists' wives. It adds to her 40-plus Souzas that will go up in a retrospective to be hosted a year and a half from now at the Kiran Nadar Museum of

AS MUCH AS
SHE IS AN ASTUTE
COLLECTOR,
KIRAN NADAR IS
ONE OF THE FEW
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BY PROFIT.

Art (KNMA) in Delhi. The work, as John Elliott pointed out in *The Independent* earlier this year, complements 'Man & Woman Grinding Their Teeth', already in her possession, along with the quirky 'Miss Fanny Brown', the rare burst of joy in his 'Flowers' and the 1964 sketch 'Mahatma Gandhi'. In her range of 40-50 S.H. Razas, the early ones excite Nadar more. "You start to look at your collection in a broader framework. So, you look at Raza as a whole, as a time scale of an artist. Then you look at the gaps," she says. This is how Nadar views

the works in her collection; as cards in a suit, filling the gaps in the larger timeline of an artist as she collects, strategically and pointedly, to tell his story.

It's not a science, it is intuitive, and sometimes you spot a work and it's like finding a missing piece of a puzzle. She has just met Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, who has revoked the KNMA's sales tax relief "in the interest of the public", to ask about the possibility of centrally located land that she is more than willing to pay full price for, to set up her next venture—a

third standalone museum to house not just her permanent collection but visiting collections and galleries—that will benefit the public.

For someone who has candidly claimed she remains untutored in art, beginning her collection as a personal enterprise, and extending it into a permanent collection at the museum, it has been a focus that has not come lightly. “I have no formal education in art. There was a feeling of inadequacy; that I should know more so I would read and try to keep abreast of things. That was a self-learning process I had to put myself through to acquire the vocabulary and community of art.” If at first she bought with sentiment, a fondness for M.F. Husain, and Manjeet Bawa’s imagery, all the Progressives, several of whom she knew personally, she also quickly learned to set sentiment aside for value, period and provenance. “I made mistakes. I bid too high for works worth less. I bought works that were bubbles. I misjudged contemporary and burnt my fingers,” she admits. From non-native speaker, Nadar, 64, philanthropist, collector and investor, is today the astute keeper of the dictionary, as it were.

The grande dame of the Indian art scene swooped in to save the Kochi-Muziris Biennale last year after the Kerala government, its primary patron, was unable to extend full support. She pitched in with the now ongoing Rs 83-lakh endowment from the CSR budget of husband Shiv Nadar’s HCL to support students. “India has many billionaires but few who carry a sense of responsibility,” says Bose Krishnamachari, founder and curator of the biennale. Critic and curator Girish Shahane, who founded the now defunct Skoda Prize whose jury Nadar once chaired, says she almost solely moves the Indian art market. Agrees New York gallerist Deepak Talwar, “Kiran is a unique force who has single-handedly revitalised the Indian art ecosystem. Not just from her pocket but with her vision and passion for art as well.” Shireen Gandhi, of Mumbai’s Chemould Prescott Road gallery, points out that

COLLECTOR’S CHOICE

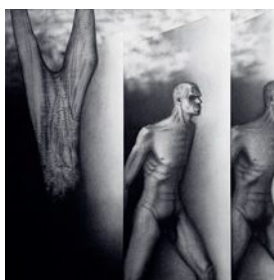
Three paintings from her collection Kiran Nadar would pick over all others she owns



‘Saurashtra’, S.H. Raza
1983



‘Shakuntala Patralekha’,
Raja Ravi Varma
1870



‘Runners’, Rameshwar Broota
1982

Nadar performs a lonely function, being literally the only art philanthropist out there.

Such is her influence that long before her retrospective of Nasreen Mohamedi in 2013 sparked world-wide interest in the artist, prices of her work began to rise. Nadar’s Mohamedi show is opening the Metropolitan

Museum of Art’s new Bruer building.

Given the very influence of her purchases, and her ready access to funds, Nadar has often been accused of boosting certain artists over others—her favourite M.F. Husain; Bharti Kher, whose bindi-covered elephant, ‘The Skin Speaks A Language Not Its Own’, was one of her first buys; or Subodh Gupta, whose towering ‘Line of Control’ adorns the entryway of her museum. But as much as she is an astute collector, she is one of the few unmotivated by profit, given that her motive is not sales but exhibition.

Nadar’s playground is now expanding. There has been a certain drive towards Indian artists globally, the V.S. Gaitonde show at the Guggenheim museum in New York that then travelled to Venice; the forthcoming Bhupen Khakhar exhibition at Tate Modern, London. “We have a lot to offer and Indian art is still undervalued compared to Western or even Chinese art,” she says.

It’s a concerted push and sometimes falls short of target. Her retrospective of Rameshwar Broota, for instance, didn’t make it overseas. Calendars get full and the West isn’t always biting. But Nadar is wilful. She’s in it for a long haul although she admits, “It is very lonely. People in the art space are in fact pulling out of it.” It is vital, Nadar says, to expand the base of collectors, and the education of art in India. “We have a dozen to 25 serious collectors. We need to expand that base and get more people to understand that art is really an asset class like property or shares and stocks.”

Right now, she notes an urgency to infuse some life into the contemporary art market—which never recovered post the Lehman Brothers crash—although the core of her collection is Modern. “In Moderns, the benchmarks are well laid down. Investing \$250,000 will get you that money back. In contemporary, those benchmarks are not set,” she says. Re-injecting that market is an investment not just of time and energy, and knowledge, but of trust. And she’s happy to be the first one to place that bet down on the table.

Follow the writer on Twitter @Gayatri_J



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THE ACTOR WHO SURVIVED TIME

Smita Patil lived to the full, died young, leaving behind memories of searingly brilliant work



Smita Patil: A Brief Incandescence
Maithili Rao
HarperCollins
Pages 347
Price Rs 450

By Mayank Shekhar

Bunkum or not, the Bechdel Test, if you don't know already, measures innate sexism in films (or popular fiction) using a very simple checklist—whether in a movie, two women characters ever talk to each other at all; if so, then is it about anything outside of a man? You'll be surprised how many films fail this test.

If there was, however, a version of the same test applied to female actors, here's what I'd like to know. Whether it is possible

for people to have a long conversation about her and her movies, without a hyphenated identity with a male co-star ever cropping up—Meryl Streep, for instance. To me, in India, no other actor, besides Smita Patil, with as prolific a career comes to mind. Even Shabana Azmi, Smita's main rival on the arthouse scene, evokes parallel memories of Naseeruddin Shah; let alone reigning female stars of those times: Rekha, Hema Malini, Jaya Bhaduri...

Of course, with Smita, besides her movies, you will notice fans inevitably talk about how penetratingly beautiful she was, albeit in an "unconventional way"—convention, in a deeply 'colourist' society, being defined by what's the preferred shade of brown for the Indian skin, or the movie screen. Smita was dark-skinned, unlike her mom and siblings. She grew up, among classmates in a Marathi-medium school, with the usual racist jibes, "*kali, kaluram, ghatan*", directed at her. She broke convention to headline some of the most seminal, socially conscious (and later even mainstream) films from the mid-1970s to 1980s. She completely submitted herself to her characters—complex, everyday rural/urban women, mostly—to kindle extreme empathy among audiences. How did that happen?

Well, to begin with, both her parents were activists with strong socialist leanings (her father Shivajirao Patil is a former state cabinet minister). Pune, where she was raised, had a robust theatre scene. It was a playground for writers and directors such as Vijay Tendulkar and Jabbar Patel who also worked in films. Further, Pune is the home of the Film & Television Institute of India (FTII), which was inarguably

the cradle of the Indian New Wave that saw the cinema screen as a realistic mirror to the human condition and society at large. This was when Smita was just starting out, even if reluctantly. She debuted with Arun Khopkar's FTII diploma film *Teevra Madhyam* (1974).

As a famous football quote goes: "You have to be in the right place at the right time, all the time anyway. Only sometimes, the ball comes to you." In Smita's case, that happened with her job as a Marathi news anchor on Doordarshan in Bombay. The camera loved her, as it were. There was something naturally arresting about her screen presence. Filmmakers with as diverse sensibilities as Dev Anand, Manoj Kumar and Shyam Benegal were almost simultaneously awestruck. Benegal gave her a break in *Charandas Chhor* (1975).

A few years on, Smita seemed like an actor in a serious hurry, piling up a thick filmography—50-plus films in under eight years, in the 1980s. It appears as if she may have even planned her premature exit. But that was the 1980s: a rather odd time for everyone—the film industry and the audiences alike. And Smita starred in several frontbencher potboilers as well. I met her as a little child on the sets of *Dance Dance* (1987), assuming those are the kind of movies she usually did (not that I knew any other kind anyway).

In *A Brief Incandescence*, Maithili Rao's deeply felt account of Smita's career, which is fairly heavy on adjectives and rightly blind to any flaws in her performances (or even personality), the author most significantly zeroes in on 10 roles that she feels displayed the sheer range of feelings and emotions the actor was capable of firing up.

The chapter is titled 'Smita Patil and Her Dasavataram'. The films being—and you may take notes, in case a binge-fest interests you—*Manthan* (1976), *Jait Re Jait* (Marathi, 1977), *Bhumika* (1977), *Akaler Sandhane* (Bengali, 1981), *Chakra* (1981), *Umbartha* (Marathi, 1982; *Subah* in Hindi), *Arth* (1982), *Bazaar* (1982), *Tarang* (1984) and *Aakhir Kyon?* (1985). I'm sure most, if not all, would have featured in the retrospective in Paris that Costa-Gavras hosted for Smita while she was still alive. Or I hope he would've included *Ardh Satya* (1983), although that was so much more an Om Puri film.

Now, Rao has been chronicling serious Indian cinema seriously for as long as I can remember. She provides a clean and sharp précis of Smita's finest films in the book, writ-

THE BOOK PLAYS FAIR TO THE READER BY BEING CURIOUS ABOUT SMITA'S PERSONAL CHOICES BUT DESISTS FROM BEING GOSSIPY AND VOYEURISTIC.



GETTY IMAGES

ten with a lot of affection and generous detailing—not just with description of Patil's presence in a movie, but of the movie itself, and the world it inhabits. This sort of rigour is rare at a time when anybody with fingers to dance on a keyboard assumes he or she is a film critic. Of course, one's interest levels drop while reading about so many of Smita's other films that have little to write home about anyway.

Still, can Smita be viewed purely as the sum of her works? Sufficiently, yes. She naturally comes across as someone more committed to the arts than serving her stardom. There is yet a playfulness about her persona. Something you can instantly catch with her dancing in the rain to the song 'Aaj Rapat Jaye' with Amitabh Bachchan in *Namak Halaal* (1982). She admittedly hated doing it. Such contradictions are even more appealing.

But there's far more at play. Most of which is outside the scope of this book. Sadly, Rao never met her as a journalist or critic. She does gather vignettes to reveal a free-spirited biker woman, prone to premonitions and psychic dreams, heartbreaks and other hiccups in relationships. Smita was a skilled photographer and a well-rounded aesthete, often delving in both costume and production design of her films. It's hard to imagine her falling for Raj Babbar. Most agree. Not because he was a married man with two children (and maybe that too). But he seemed like such a Bollywood garden variety. Rao plays fair to the reader by being curious

about it herself. But digs no deeper, I suspect, to desist from being gossipy and voyeuristic.

The drama in Smita's life outrivals many of her films. She died at 31, rather unexpectedly, on a hospital bed, after delivering her first child. *Mirch Masala* (1987), a total tour de force, was the last film she acted in (several others released later). She was at the top of her game. Much like so many other artistes, whose early deaths turned out to be inadvertent moves toward assured immortality—James Dean, Marilyn Monroe, Heath Ledger, Amy Winehouse...

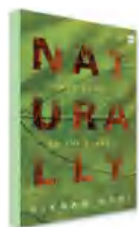
Smita would have turned 60 on October 17, 2015. Probably the book was planned accordingly. I woke up that day to my Facebook and Twitter timelines being literally flooded with emotional outpourings over Smita. Eh? It's heartening, but odd, I thought. She died in 1986. Public memory is usually depressingly short, especially with popular culture. I felt equally intrigued reading tributes to Smita in this book, from a journalist, blogger, established actor, aspiring stage actor, NGO executive—all of who continue to feel her presence. They were too young, if born at all, when Smita was a star.

This phenomenon feels a bit like Malcolm Gladwell's *The Tipping Point*—an unpredictably second round of halo and fame bestowed on a product/person much after they were so "in" once. Smita's films have evidently survived the test of time. Rao's account suitably adds to the aura.

Mayank Shekhar is a film critic and author

MANDATORY READING ON THE ROAD TO PARIS

Vikram Soni's book sends out a timely reminder ahead of the climate talks: we, and only we, are to blame



Naturally: Tread Softly on the Planet
by Vikram Soni
HarperCollins India
Pages 284
Price Rs 399

By Mark Tully

Copies of this book, written by distinguished physicist Vikram Soni, should be sent to all the delegates attending the crucial Paris Climate Change Conference of the United Nations starting at the end of November. The conference will concentrate on reducing carbon emissions and finding clean energy so that we can continue to live as we are living. Soni reminds us that the “boggling and critical cross-road” we have reached has been created by the way we live. So the UN conference is going to miss the point.

What is the crisis? Dwindling lakes, vanishing forests, disappearing species, glaciers melting, air not fit to breathe, to take just a few examples given by Soni. He calls his book *Naturally* because the crisis we humans have created has been caused by the unnatural lives we live. There are, he points out, cycles in nature which ensure there is no waste, but he says “over the last fifty years we have probably consumed and dumped more than in all previous human history”. The consuming and dumping is “escalating”, and much of what is dumped will not recycle. Nature's cycle depends on diverse species interacting with each other. Diversity of species depends on diversity of locations. Not only have we cavalierly destroyed species, we have also reduced the diversity of locations by urbanisation which takes no account of the need for diverse open spaces, monocropping, and deforestation.

The climate crisis has led to a feverish search for technological solutions to reduce carbon emissions. There are some scientists and economists who claim those solutions will be found and so maintain that there is no need for changes in the way we live. But Soni points out that technology has all too often created those problems. He says, “We know now that technology, unlike nature, does not recycle; it is precipitating global imbalances in the air and biosphere. So we have reached some limits where life itself is at risk from our evolution.”



Illustration by SAURABH SINGH

Soni describes how economics has come to lie at the heart of the crisis we face. Economists rule the roost nowadays, excluding other disciplines in governments' decision-making and, most importantly, ignoring the value of the environment although they now show signs of acknowledging this. Illustrating the effect of economics which has ignored the environment, Soni says that in capitalist America and Japan profit has been considered more important than environment, and in Soviet Eastern Europe production was the economic measure that mattered and so they ignored pollution. As a result, both the capitalists and the communists have created chronic shortages of clean water.

Soni believes sociologists and philosophers are just as important as economists because to cope with the crisis we face “we will have to define once more the quality of life”. He finds a place for the Buddha and Gandhi's non-violence in defining the new values because their *ahimsa* is based on the understanding that all life has to be respected. He makes the fundamental point that Buddhism “did not put man at the centre of the universe”. The Buddha did not think nature was a resource we were free to use as we wish to.

Naturally is a timely, persuasive, warning of the perils the whole of creation faces if we don't change the way we live. The trouble is that we and our leaders are convinced that blindly pursuing economic growth and consuming more and more of nature's resources is the recipe for happiness. Soni should now persuade us that we will be happier if we follow his advice—“rein in and renew our links with nature”.

Mark Tully is a journalist and author

EVERYONE'S GITA

Devdutt Pattanaik's take makes for engaging reading, but don't expect any value addition

By Bibek Debroy



My Gita
by Devdutt Pattanaik
Rupa
Pages 256
Price Rs 295

Devdutt Pattanaik writes (and draws) well. His illustrations always make his books attractive. Every person finds his/her own meaning in the text known as Bhagavad Gita. The title of this book makes it clear this isn't a translation, with or without interpretation. This is Pattanaik's take

on the Bhagavad Gita. The scripture has 18 chapters, so does *My Gita*, although contents of the chapters don't follow contents of chapters in the Bhagavad Gita. With an introduction ('Before') and conclusion ('After'), this volume uses the Bhagavad Gita and its shlokas as a peg to give his take on Hinduism, at least several aspects of it.

What is great about Pattanaik? I think he is a master storyteller, often

with delightful new nuances. But there is a dividing line between telling the tales and interpreting and dissecting Hinduism, or any of its texts. I was uncomfortable with some parts of his earlier book *Business Sutra* for that reason. And that's precisely the reason why I am extremely uncomfortable with *My Gita*. Consider the following quotes: "The earliest word for God in the Rig Veda is 'ka', which is the first alphabet in Sanskrit, from which come all the interrogative pronouns such as what, when, where, why, how. Thus, divinity had something to do with enquiry. The *kavi*, or poet, enquired about 'ka'. He later came to be known as the *rishi*, the observer." "The word 'samadhi' is based on two words: 'sama' that means the first beat of the musical cycle in Hindustani classical music and 'adi' that means primal origin."

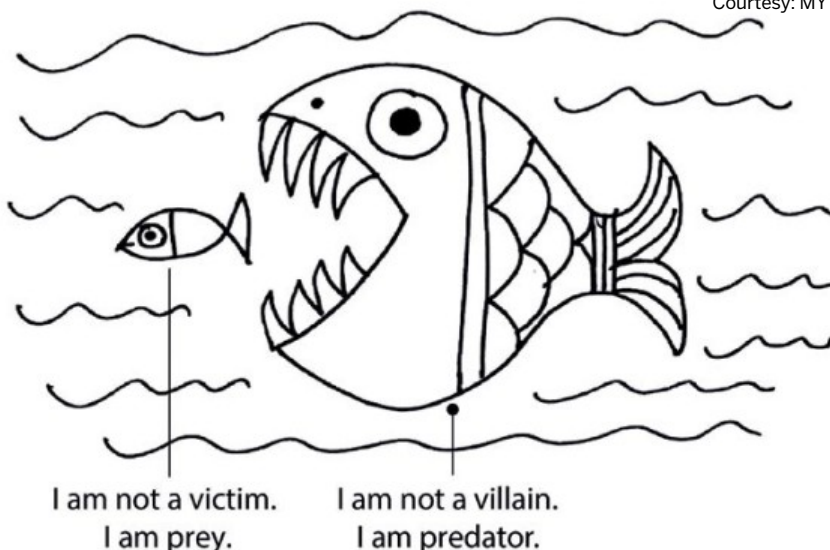
Both statements are false/misleading and no one with a better sense of Hinduism/Sanskrit would have made them, not in the form stated. It is best to stick to one's skill set or become sufficiently proficient before venturing

into the hazardous. However, it is good to cite the chapter and verse of the text it is being taken from. For instance, "Gautama's wife Ahalya desires Indra." Since this is Ahalya desiring Indra, and not Indra desiring Ahalya, more than a casual assertion was warranted.

Analysing the importance of the Bhagavad Gita against the broader backdrop of Hinduism is difficult. Indeed, the scripture was a masterly work of synthesis, integrating vedanta, *sankhya* and yoga, with notions of bhakti yoga. Any analysis of the synthesis requires considerable understanding of *sankhya*, yoga and vedanta. Perhaps I am being a bit harsh. Like Krishna says in the Bhagavad Gita, that we are free to serve him in whatever form we want and are rewarded accordingly, can I therefore not have my own take on the Bhagavad Gita, without necessarily acquiring the trappings of learning? Indeed, I can. The book makes for engaging reading. However, any value addition in appreciating the Bhagavad Gita is difficult. There are plenty of books on it and you should pick up one of those.

The Gita is called so because it was sung and chanted. There is a poetic-cum-musical quality to the Bhagavad Gita which any translation/analysis in English cannot possibly convey. How many of us are aware of the beauty of the two metres (*anushtubha*, *trishubha*) in which it is composed? That again requires some familiarity with Sanskrit prosody. Hence, the substantive point is that there is no substitute to reading and hearing the Bhagavad Gita in Sanskrit. With a translation as an aid, one should take that next step. If you take that step, you will find 'Your Gita' and there will be no need for anyone else's. As for this book, give it a read, but don't take it too seriously.

Courtesy: MY GITA



Big Fish and Small Fish

Economist Bibek Debroy is a member of the Niti Aayog

THE FIRST HERO

BRIJMOHAN LALL MUNJAL'S SUCCESS WITH TWO-WHEELERS WAS FORGED THROUGH INTERPERSONAL SKILLS AND AN UNCANNY SENSE OF WHAT WOULD SELL

By Asit Jolly

A year after his family first founded one of India's most enduring corporate success stories—Hero Cycles—in Ludhiana in 1956, Brijmohan Lall Munjal, then just 33 years old, set himself a mantra: “Reach the factory a good half an hour before your workers. They will not only respect you but always know that you mean business.” Rajesh Bhambi, a family friend who grew up as the Munjals' neighbour in Ludhiana's Model Town, says the man would unerringly drive into his cycle factory at 8.30 a.m., 30 minutes ahead of the first work shift. This until he ceded management of Hero Cycles to his brother Om Prakash Munjal five years ago.

‘Lalaji’ to his workforce, ‘Hero’ to the group's numerous suppliers and vendors, and, ‘BM’ to his partners at Honda Motor, Munjal was born in Kamalia, now a part of the Toba Tek Singh district in Pakistan. His father Bahadur Chand owned a small wholesale foodgrain business that had to be folded up when the family opted to move, first to Amritsar and later Ludhiana, ahead of Partition, in 1944.

Clearly gifted with an uncanny sense of what would sell and where the market was headed, Munjal, who never went to college, set up shop to manufacture bicycle handlebars and forks. Less than a decade on, his vision, coupled with an adventuresome spirit, that could only have been engendered by the capricious climes of the troubled Partition years, made Hero Cycles a reality.

Less than 20 years later in 1975, when India was struggling to deal with a global petrol price hike, Hero became the largest manufacturer of bicycles in the country. A decade on, in 1986, Guinness World Records officially acknowledged the group as the world's largest maker of bicycles, a record that hasn't been topped since.

Always ahead of the curve, in 1984, when the rest of Punjab seemed to be irrevocably sinking into the Khalistani abyss, Munjal inked an alliance with Japan's Honda Motor to manufacture highly fuel-efficient and eco-friendly motorcycles. It was a huge leap of faith but it catapulted the Indian company from building bicycles to employing state-of-the-art Japanese technology to manufacture world-class motorised two-wheelers. The deal with Honda was worked out as a joint venture—the Japanese

bringing the technology and Hero contributing an understanding of the *desi* consumer and markets. Hero MotoCorp (formerly Hero Honda Motors Ltd) has since been the world's largest two-wheeler manufacturer for 14 consecutive years. With his keen sense of the future, Munjal clearly saw where the country was headed and set out to change the way Indians commuted. Remember the Hero Honda tagline—‘fill it, shut it, forget it’?

Ninety-two years old when he passed away on November 1, India Inc has hailed Munjal's extraordinary life. Rahul Bajaj, who competed fiercely with the man in selling motorbikes, acknowledges Munjal as his “guru”. Maruti Suzuki Chairman R.C. Bhargava says it was Munjal's humility and willingness to adapt to new technology that won Honda's trust and led to a “long-lasting partnership with the Japanese automaker”. Confederation of Indian Industry President Sumit Mazumder and his Ludhiana business fraternity—Avon Cycles CMD Onkar Singh Pahwa, Avtar Bhogal of Bhogal Sons and the Oswal Group's Kamal Oswal—have championed Munjal as a “patriarch” and “torch bearer”.

Perhaps the most telling elegy comes from his own family. The Munjals remained a tightly knit clan thanks to the justice and fairplay exercised by Brijmohan Lall. All the four brothers, he once told a reporter, lived in similar homes and drove identical cars. Unlike in most other family-owned ventures, Munjal ensured his brood stayed together.

Recalling the early years, Bhambi tells of how Munjal worked overtime to forge lasting relationships with partners and stakeholders. “He knew more than 1,000 dealers and vendors of Hero MotoCorp by their first names,” he says, recalling how, until just a few years ago, Munjal made it a point to join functions—weddings, cremations, births—with families who had partnered with him.

It will take much more than this obituary to tell the story of Brijmohan Lall Munjal. But there is one endearing story that must be told: through the 26-year partnership with Honda Motor that ended in 2011, Japanese representatives from Honda took to routinely signing off their names with the common suffix ‘Munjal’ out of affection for the man who not only brought them to India but showed them how it works.

Follow the writer on Twitter @AsitJolly

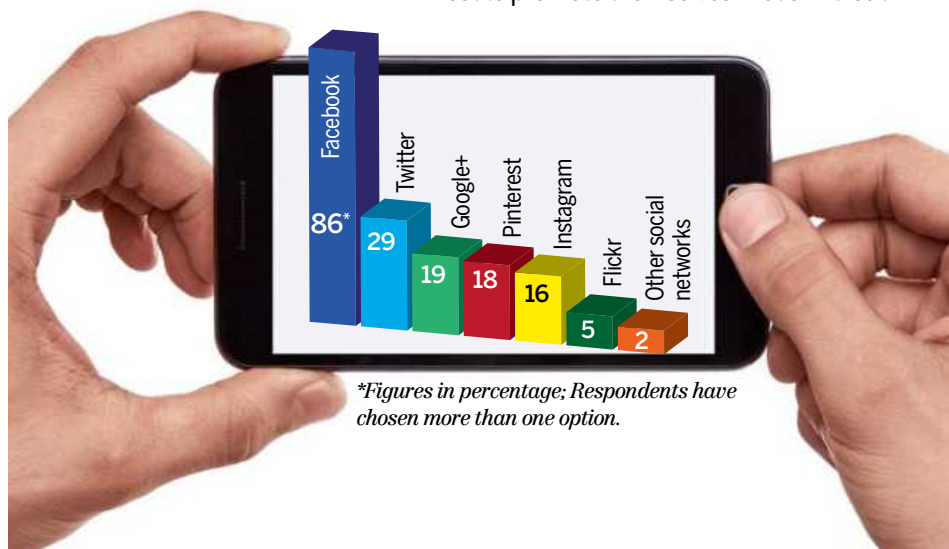
BRIJMOHAN LALL MUNJAL
1923-2015



VIVAN MEHRA

BRAND WAGON

Which social networking sites do brands use the most to promote themselves? Let's find out:

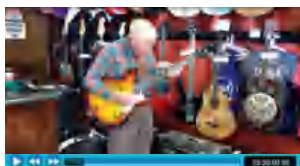


**Figures in percentage; Respondents have chosen more than one option.*

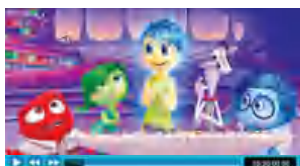
Graphic by NAOREM SANJOY SINGH

Source: Voucherbin October 2015

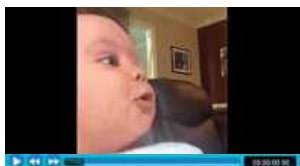
➔ viral video



Over 2 million people were wowed by the guitar skills of an 80-year-old man from Nashville named Bob Wood.



A video accurately describing the real story behind the animated film *Inside Out* shocked over 1.5 million.



A howling contest between a baby and his pet dogs amused over a million.

➔ web lol

Hugging It Out



A netizen on the sharing site Reddit compared Prime Minister Narendra Modi to an overly attached girlfriend. This is primarily due to the PM's tendency to give everyone he's photographed with a bear hug. An album showing Modi hugging Mark Zuckerberg, Barack Obama and other heads of state is gaining traction online.

➔ net fail

Words, Not So Wise

After author Chetan Bhagat's tone-deaf tweet, "What do historians do? I am genuinely curious. This happened. Then this happened. Then this. Ok work done for the day", people responded sarcastically wondering the same about others such as scientists, athletes and writers, among others. One even composed a similar tweet wondering what Bhagat's professors at IIT and IIM did.



➔ web win

An Epic Stunt

Over 3 million people watched Aladdin's magic carpet ride come to life on the streets of New York. The idea, conceived by YouTube channel PrankvsPrank, showcased a man dressed as Aladdin whizzing past cars on an electric skateboard covered with a carpet.



➔ web WOW

Sari Dance

A recent flashmob in a mall in south Delhi dedicated to the Indian sari has over 200,000 views online. Over 50 women, donning beautiful sarees, performed a choreographed number to Bollywood tunes. The flashmob was organised by Devditi, a foundation that works towards women's empowerment.



➔ internet star of the week

Policing can be Fun

A policewoman in Washington is getting tons of praise after she helped break up a group of fighting teens by starting a dance-off. Instead of using force, the officer, who doesn't want to be named, challenged the group to an epic dance battle. When one of the teens took her up on the offer, it defused the situation. Even President Barack Obama mentioned her in a tweet.

➔ what's new

App Alert

Movie Tonight recommends movies you can watch.



Yellow helps you make friends via Snapchat.



Follow the writer on Twitter @Ikummi

MOST TROLLED



ALIA BHATT

Branded dumb for not being able to answer who the President of India was on a TV show, and trolled eternally.



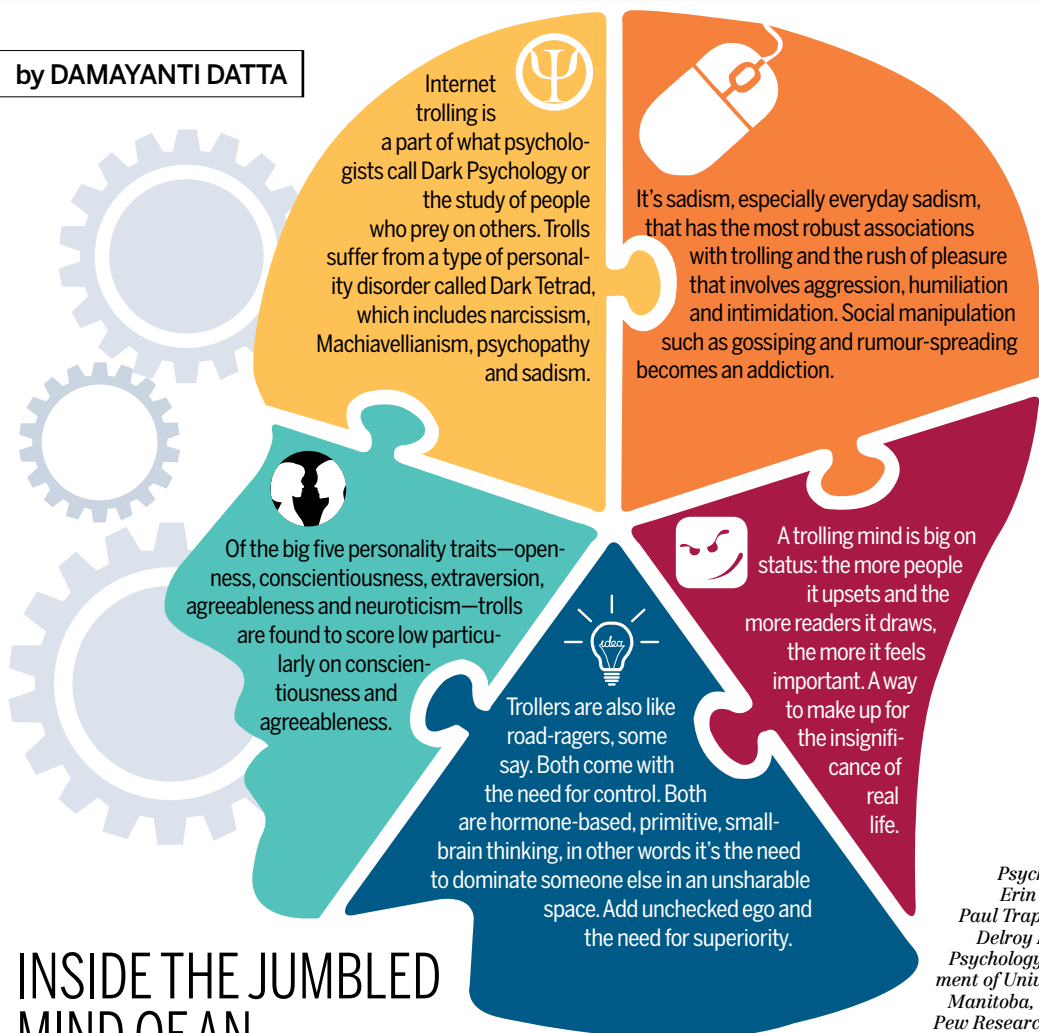
ANUSHKA SHARMA

Trolled for her lip job, for misspelling APJ Abdul Kalam and even for Virat Kohli not playing well.



TIGER SHROFF

Fair skin, long hair, pink lips, and mercilessly teased on social media.



Source:
Psychologists
Erin Buckels,
Paul Trapnell and
Delroy Paulhus;
Psychology department
of University of
Manitoba, Canada;
Pew Research Center

INSIDE THE JUMBLED MIND OF AN

INTERNET TROLL

Being trolled and tortured? Take heart. You are just another victim. Research shows trolls have serious personal issues that they might not even be aware of. What's more, they are likely to be harassers in real life.

CRIME AND PUNISHMENT

Some say it's about freedom of speech but in countr



#SELFIEWITHDAUGHTER

In June, actor Shruti Seth and women's rights activist Kavita Krishnan were threatened with rape and even public lynching as soon as they expressed their opinion against the PM's campaign.

Krishnan wrote to the commissioner of Delhi Police with snapshots of the comments, requesting him to treat these as an FIR.



DEATH ONLINE

In 2006, one of the first cases of death due to cyberbullying was reported in the US when 13-year-old Megan Meier killed herself after being bullied online. The bully, Lori Drew, turned out to be a middle-aged neighbour, with a MySpace account. Drew was acquitted.



TROLLS BEWARE

Instead of fun and easy conversations, the internet is now a place for venom and vitriol. But online incivility may soon be punished. While research reveals mental problems among the internet nasties, the police and troll-busters are gearing up to fight them with lawsuits and worse.



INDIA'S FIRST TROLL ARREST?

When journalist Swati Chaturvedi lodged an FIR in June against an anonymous Twitter handle @LutyensInsider for trolling her along with 40,000-odd followers, Delhi Police got into action. The handle, suspected to belong to a senior male journalist, disappeared. Now, the troll is facing arrest for stalking, defamation and outraging the modesty of a woman, under IPC.

FIRST TROLL BUSTER

For those who are suffering from internet abuses, there is now @BhaktHunters, a team of students and professionals who don't subscribe to any political ideology and report abusive accounts to Twitter India and get them blocked.



WHO ARE THE TROLLS?

In internet slang, it's a person who sparks discord on the internet by posting disruptive, inflammatory or abusive messages on blogs, in chat rooms or forums, deliberately and in the safety of anonymity, to provoke, hurt, derail, intimidate or stop a conversation.



Graphic by RAHUL SHARMA

MOST TROLLED



SONAKSHI SINHA

A repeated target of trolls—from the size of her forehead to her criticism of the ban on sale of meat in Mumbai during a Jain festival.



VISHAL DADLANI

The music director was sent through the wringer for blocking people on his microblogging handle.



YO YO HONEY SINGH

From his lyrics to his dress and style of singing, rapper Honey Singh is a favourite subject of trolls.

ies around the world, extreme trolling is being seen as a criminal offence

ARRESTED FOR TROLLING

In 2011, one of the first arrests for internet trolling took place in Britain when a man was jailed for mocking dead teenagers on various websites. In January 2014, two people were found guilty of sending death and rape threats to feminist campaigner Caroline Criado-Perez. The two blamed it on alcohol.



BAN ANONYMITY ON NET

Twitter is updating its violent threats policy and trying to muzzle the worst trolls with new rules. Facebook's former marketing director **Randi Zuckerberg** and former CEO of Google **Eric Schmidt** have both suggested that anonymous posting should be phased out.





MANDAR DEODHAR

SCARY DEBUT

Priyanka Chopra is not the only Bollywood actor who went to the US and made an impression. **Jacqueline Fernandez** quietly shot her Hollywood debut *Definition of Fear*, in which she is one of the four girls whose holiday in an old mansion goes terrifyingly wrong. The Capital will first be witness to the *Kick* star's screams when the film premieres at the Delhi International Film Festival on December 5.



TAKING THE LEAD

Neena Gupta takes a break from playing mommy roles to be the leading lady in the drama *The Threshold*. Gupta essays a 60-something wife whose idyllic retired life in the Himalayas with her husband (Rajit Kapur) is tested when the couple is forced to reassess their decades-long marriage.

WRITE CHOICE

The otherwise quiet **Sonali Bendre**, 40, will be making some noise in November. The actress makes her debut as an author with a book offering words of wisdom on parenting. She will also return to the small screen after a short break to host the Colors show, *Mission Sapne*.



VIKRAM SHARMA

GO FIGURE 83

Bibhuti Bhushan Nayak set a Guinness World Record for most knuckle push-ups in a minute. The feat was accomplished at a literature festival in Mumbai.

MAN OF STEEL

From Exhibition Road in Patna to Exhibition Road in Kensington, **Subodh Gupta** has come a long way. Gupta's installation 'When Soak Becomes Spill', which features a giant steel bucket with utensils popping out, has temporarily found home on the famous road in London. Part of the V&A's India Season, the art work will be standing tall until January 31.



ROHIT CHAWLA

HOW WAS THE WEEK?



SUPER

Sania Mirza

Capped off a spectacular year by winning the year-end WTA Finals with doubles partner Martina Hingis.

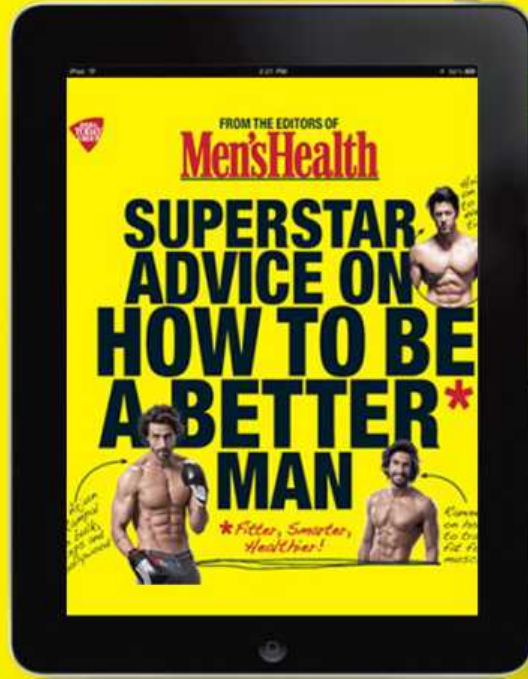


GREAT

Ranvir Shorey

His performance in *Titli* won unanimous acclaim, reigniting his career.

■ Compiled by **Suhani Singh**
Follow the writer on Twitter @suhani84

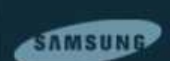


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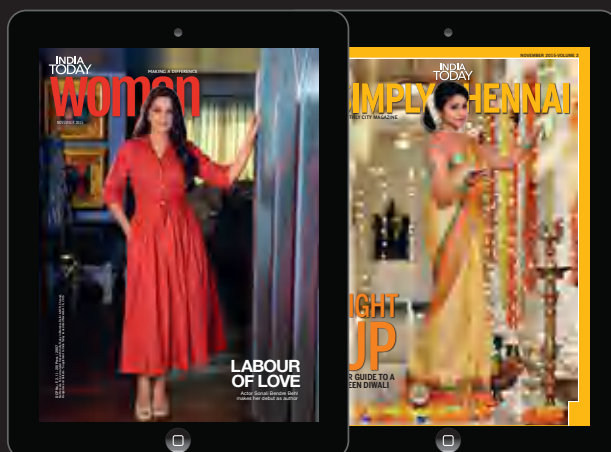
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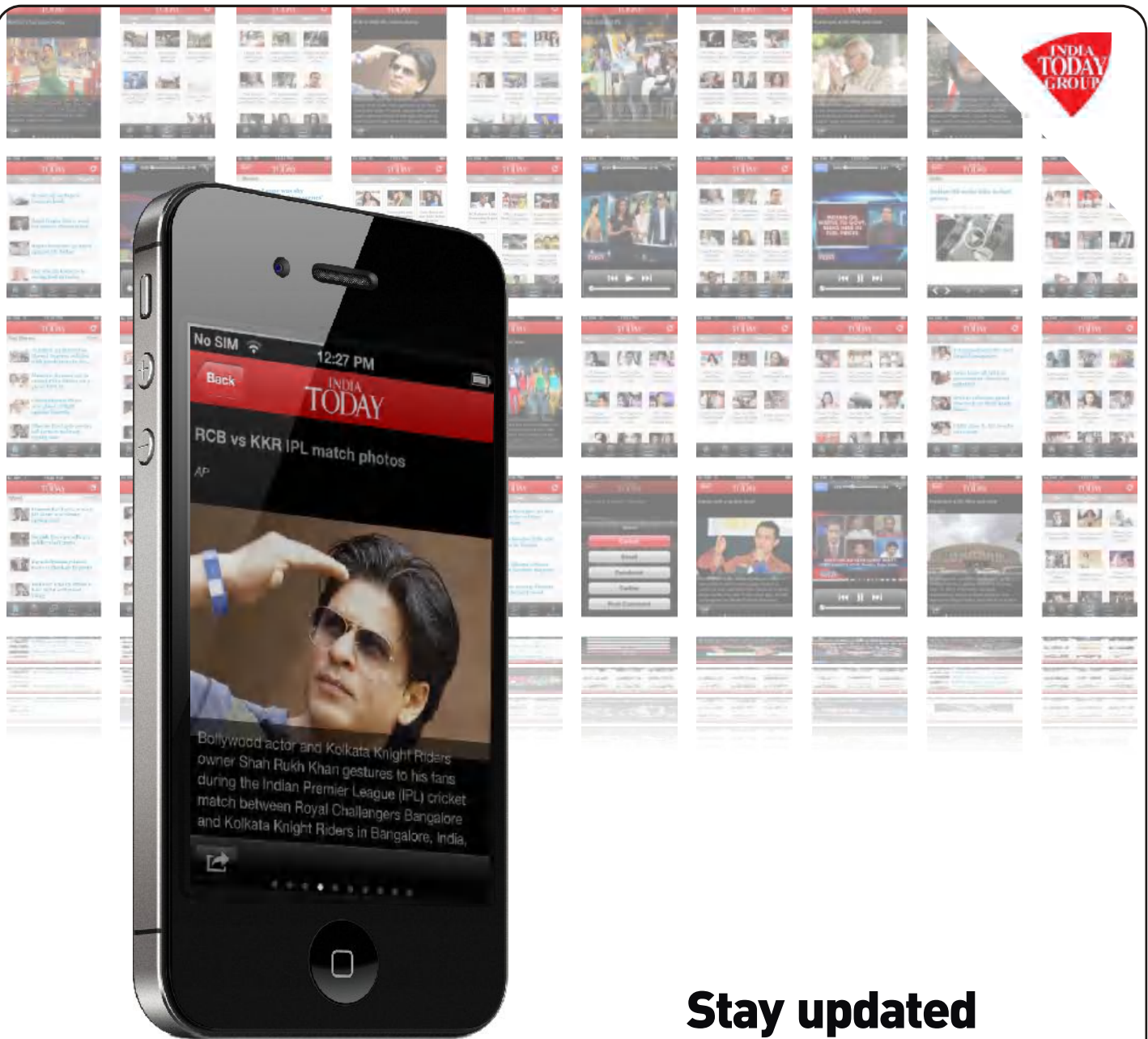
NOVEMBER 2015



DCP No.: F. 2. (1 - 20) Press / 2007
Not for sale. To be circulated free with India Today in Mumbai, Delhi & NCR, Chennai,
Bangalore and Kolkata. "Supplement to India Today issue dated November 16, 2015"

LABOUR OF LOVE

Actor Sonali Bendre Behl
makes her debut as author



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Vol. 9 Number 11; November 2015

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Printed and published by Ashish Kumar Bagga
on behalf of Living Media India Limited.

Printed at Thomson Press India Limited, 18-35

Milestone, Delhi Mathura Road,

Faridabad-121007, (Haryana) and at A-9,

Industrial Complex, Maraimalai Nagar, District
Kancheepuram-603209, (Tamil Nadu).

Published at K-9, Connaught Circus,

New Delhi-110001. Editor: Kaveree Bamzai.

• India Today does not take responsibility for
returning unsolicited publication material.

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COTTON FLARED DRESS FROM SHIFT BY NIMISH SHAH

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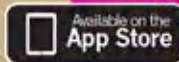
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Why is it important for engaged couples to sign a prenuptial agreement before marriage?



IMAGES BAZAAR

QUESTION OF THE MONTH

READERS WRITE IN

- ✓ Murphy's law states 'If anything can go wrong, it probably will.' Marriages are no exception to this. When a couple gets engaged, both parties bring personal and business assets in to the relationship and hence stand to benefit from a pre-nup. Thus expectations are set from the beginning and this prevents surprises during a divorce trial.

Prashanth Balakrishnan, Chennai

- ✓ Agreement is the ability to express one's feelings and convictions balanced with consideration. Through a prenuptial agreement, the engaged couple preserve the expectations of the parties and prevent surprise in a divorce proceeding. So it should get legal sanctity and come under the Indian Contract Act, 1872.

Susmita Patnaik, Odissa

- ✓ Diamonds are forever, but a marriage may not be. So a pre-nup is important for engaged couples. It can be used to clarify financial rights, avoid arguments about alimony and also ensure protection from debts, in the event of a divorce. In the absence of one, the spouse may have to deal with the troublesome and sometimes unfair division of property and management of this property, including the right to sell.

Shalini Pandey, Delhi



Ten winning letters from the India Today Woman online poll will receive a Lakme gift hamper. Winners will be notified by email. Letters may be edited for space and clarity.

TO WIN MORE EXCITING PRIZES CHECK OUT
OUR NEXT QUESTION OF THE MONTH
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“THERE IS NO FORMULA FOR PARENTING”

ACTOR, MOTHER AND NOW AUTHOR, SONALI BENDRE BEHL ON RAISING A PERFECT, CURIOUS AND COMPASSIONATE CHILD

By SUHANI SINGH

Ranveer Behl, 10, has just walked into the well-appointed living room of the Juhu home he shares with parents, filmmaker Goldie Behl and actor Sonali Bendre Behl. He settles comfortably next to Bendre and immediately turns his attention to the digital recorder. We suffer a mini stroke as it falls down, praying that the over 45-minute long conversation hasn't vanished. It doesn't. He then goes on to turn it into a toy which he tries to insert in his pretty mother's

mouth. "Imagine if your thoughts were sent directly into it?" We try to salvage our recorder by distracting him with a question—how much would he grade his mother on a scale of 10? He quickly responds, "9.5." Bendre wants to know why she didn't score a perfect ten. He says because she doesn't allow him to use the iPad for more than two hours.

Parenting is one of the most demanding jobs and like most mothers Bendre has had her share of good and bad days. Some of them have made their way into a book, *The Modern Gurukul, My Experiments with Parenting*, which hits the stands later in

November. Bendre says that Ranveer knows that 'Mama' has written a book and "there's a lot of me in it", but he is still too young to understand what it includes. "Poor thing, when he grows up he could ask, 'how could you do this to me?'" worries Bendre. Her husband while supportive has already said, "Do you realise the kind of pressure you are putting on my son?"

The book is not promising a recipe to raise a perfect child. Instead, it is a personal book in which a mother, who happens to be a celebrity, recaps her action-packed journey raising her only child. There

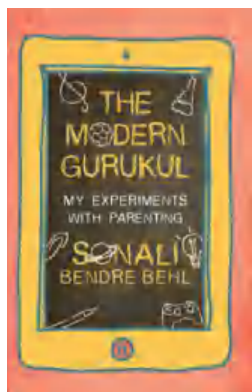
Sonali Bendre Behl at home

MUCH LIKE FELLOW ACTORS AISHWARYA RAI BACHCHAN AND KAJOL, BENDRE TOOK A BREAK FROM ACTING TO WELCOME A CHILD IN HER LIFE



Bendre with husband Goldie Behl and son Ranveer

“Children do understand. If they are tuned in to your tone of voice and your heartbeat, they get it. If you are agitated, they tend to think that they have done something bad.”



PAGES 204

PRICE ₹250

RANDOM HOUSE INDIA

Sonali Bendre Behl's *The Modern Gurukul, My Experiments with Parenting* is about bringing up your child in the digital age and need to go back to our roots to raise a healthy, inquisitive child

are Bendre's struggles; frustration over why her baby doesn't like her breast milk and his subsequent speech troubles, and fun anecdotes such as when Bendre starts doing push-ups in a restaurant to motivate her son to be physically active. It is a breezy read which gives the audience a glimpse into the life of an actor who opted out of the spotlight after had a child in 2005.

Dressed in comfortable denims and a striped T-shirt, Bendre looks relaxed and fit, showing no signs of parenting troubles she faced early on. The idea for a book, she says, emerged from a tattered notepad in which she jotted all the lessons she learned as a mother. It is noteworthy because Bendre is not the

sort of mother who has recorded when her child first walked or when his first tooth fell. Behl and she had decided that they would be parent to one child. Says Bendre, "We both started working really young in life. We have not done what teenagers normally would have. We promised each other we would do it later." As the experiences and understandings in her tattered 'Bible' increased, her friends encouraged her to turn author. "I had all this information which I have not been able to use," she says, "but I could give it to some parent who could make use of it."

Much like fellow actors such as Kajol and Aishwarya Rai Bachchan, Bendre took a break from acting to welcome a child

into her life. She was 30 when she became a mother. "As I started parenting, I realised there is no formula to it," says Bendre. She also recognised that reading countless parenting books may prepare you a bit but will not entirely solve the puzzle that is motherhood. "Initially, I was like I can handle anything. What's the big deal about being a mother? I was not prepared for the changes which are so subtle that they creep up on you," she says. "My whole life turned upside down once I became a mother." In the first year, it was anything but an easy ride.

Bendre writes that she spent sleepless nights, and thereby, compromised on her health initially as she worried, "Am I getting it right?" Then came the

realisation. “Calm down and just go with your gut.”

It ended up being a wise move. Her instinct told her to be honest with her child. In *The Modern Gurukul, My Experiments with Parenting*, Bendre presents herself as a parent who is willing to apologise to her son if she has erred and also keen to share her thoughts with him as he grows older. “Children do understand,” she says. “If they are tuned in to your tone of voice and literally your heartbeat, they get it. If you are agitated, children tend to think that they have done something wrong. I didn’t want him to think like that.” In such a scenario, having an honest relationship with your child is important. “There are times when I explain that what he is doing is upsetting me.”

As her son grew older, Bendre did major stints on the small screen such as judging reality show competitions as well as doing fiction shows more recently including one with Balaji Telefilms titled *Ajeeb Daastaan Hai Ye*. But she has largely stayed away from the big screen after her marriage in 2002, barring a few odd roles and a special appearance in director Milan Luthria’s *Once Upon a Time in Mumbai Dobaara*, in which she was former lover to Akshay Kumar’s character Shoaib Khan. It was a conscious choice and Bendre is happy to settle in her ongoing role as mother.

Bendre hopes that her book resonates with fathers too. Her husband, she says, was surprised to discover how they both viewed the



INVEST IN EDUCATION

- The day our children stop asking us questions, it will be time for us to start worrying.
- I have explained to my son a simple philosophy—there will always be someone who has more than him, and someone who has less than what he owns. What he chooses to concentrate on is his choice. As parents, we have to teach our children the importance of feeling blessed for all that they have.
- We need to bring up our boys to be compassionate human beings. I understand that they need to be tough but being tough and being compassionate have to go hand-in-hand. It is all about balance.
- Each time I behave in a

coarse manner, I express regret. Over time, I have realised the best way to deal with it is to talk about it. My son Ranveer and I have had several heart-to-heart conversations. When I am annoyed, I ask him for space. I do not step out of my room until I have calmed down. There have been times when I have got emotional and spoken to him in detail about what has bothered me.

- Parenting to me is about manoeuvring his thoughts in the right direction.
- Our investment is going to be our son’s education. He should make his own destiny but we need to provide him the tools to live a fruitful life and be a good human being.

same incident differently. Bendre though had reservations about how much she was willing to disclose, but she has gone ahead and touched upon subjects that many would hesitate to discuss openly. For example, her feelings in the first few hours after her son was born and his “choppy speech”. “There are really big issues in the world,” she says about the condition. “This is a minor thing. The way I see it is, he has a great mind which can be put to good use in this world rather than wasting it on his insecurities.” There are instances when she is unafraid and willing to let her guard down. “Nobody talks about real parenting and the issues which emerge,” says Bendre, hoping *The Modern Gurukul, My Experiments with Parenting* could be that book.

A call from her domestic help asking for the dinner menu is a sign that it’s time for us to wrap up the interview. Sounding like any other concerned mother, Bendre asks her son if he has finished his homework and if he had something to eat. He answers in the affirmative and the two go on to talk about Serbian American inventor Nikola Tesla until it is time for farewell.

In the book, Bendre expresses concern that she may come to regret her decision to write a book on parenting if her son turns into a “wild child”. “For all you know, two years down the line people may not say that he is such a well brought up boy,” she says. For now, she needn’t worry. The child is just fine.



(from left) Professor Vasudha Kamat, Vice-Chancellor, SNDT University; Sangita Jindal, Chairperson, JSW Foundation and Abha Narain Lambah, conservation architect

RESTORING A LEGACY

THE 100-YEAR-OLD, SNTD KANYASHALA HERITAGE BUILDING IN MUMBAI HAS BEEN PRESERVED TO ITS FORMER GLORY IN COLLABORATION WITH THE JSW FOUNDATION

By MOEENA HALIM

At the peak of its popularity, SNTD (Shreemati Nathibai Damodar Thackersey) Kanyashala, Mumbai, found its beautiful 20th century townhouse building animated with close to 2,500 young girls eager to learn about the world and its workings in their native Marathi and Gujarati. Today, although a board still stands outside the Vasanji House proclaiming the building a *kanyashala* (a girls' school), it is no longer being used as one. "The school closed down in 2012 due to insufficient number of students. The building needed repairs and renovation, since it was declared a heritage Grade III building, the restoration work needed permission from the Heritage Committee," reveals Professor Vasudha Kamat, Vice-Chancellor, SNTD University.

For years, the stately building, with its elegant porte-cochère with decorative stone columns and beautiful architecture, faced neglect and suffered the vagaries of weather. But with the help of the JSW Foundation and conservation architect Abha Narain Lambah, the building has now been restored to its former glory. This time around, the rooms are going to be used by budding young artists to learn the fine nuances of art through their visual arts programmes.

A BUILDING WITH HISTORY

The school, established by the SNTD University in 1924, had played a landmark role in the education of girls in the early 1900s. It was moved to the Vasanji House in Girgaum, south Mumbai, in 1938 to accommodate the growing number of students, but found its popularity dwindling at the turn of the new millennium, possibly because of the gentrification and commercialisation of the locality. "The school was set up at the cusp of empowerment for women in India. A hundred years down the line, however, it had become irrelevant to society. The group of people who would send their children to vernacular medium schools had moved out of the area or had decided to send them to English medium schools," says Lambah.

The property's repair and restoration was discussed at the university's Building and Works Committee meetings several times, but it wasn't until the new team along with new Vice-Chancellor Professor Vasudha Kamat joined in May-June 2011 that the thought process took some shape. "With the demographic changes in the recent past, the university saw no point in setting up a new secondary school for girls," reveals Kamat.

With talks of shifting the art department to the Kanyashala building surfacing, it wasn't long before Sangita Jindal, Chairperson of the JSW Foundation, responsible for

social development projects of the JSW Group of Companies, and a keen patron of art, pledged her support towards the conservation of the building and its revival as the Jindal Centre for Arts. "We are regularly approached by educational institutions in need of support. In the past, we have supported the Sir JJ School of Art and this seemed like an equally worthy project. It brings together our interest

neighbourhood that we can take a heritage structure, and rather than knocking it down to set up a high rise, revive it this way," says Lambah.

Girgaum is in a sense one of the oldest parts of the city, now deeply neglected, making it important for conservation. The Kanyashala is an amazing gem of a building that stands in the midst of a chaotic streetscape, on the cusp of change. "The ground plus three storied structure of

ART AFTER HOURS

- ▶ The Jindal Centre for Arts will be flagged off in early 2016 at the Kanyashala building.
- ▶ They plan to host courses on drawing, painting, calligraphy, ceramics, pottery, clay modelling and digital arts. The centre will also conduct workshops and seminars on art appreciation and art history.

in supporting heritage preservation, conservation, education and the arts," says Jindal.

HERITAGE WORTH PRESERVING

With Lambah coming on board, the project coincidentally became an all-women initiative. For Lambah, who has worked on the Asiatic Society of Mumbai, Town Hall, as well as the Municipal Corporation building, the significance of the initiative was that the structure was not a public monument. "This one was a small, domestic scale building in Girgaum, which wouldn't be awarded government funding. I wanted to demonstrate in this

the Kanyashala combines the traditional timber balcony architecture seen in Mumbai's historic chawls and many old vernacular buildings, with a neo-classical facade of carved stone columns," says Preeti Goel Sanghi, project coordinator, JSW Foundation team.

During the 16-month-long restoration project, which began in May 2014, the team made sure not to change the character of the building by retaining the Burma teak wood and the Minton tiles. Most importantly, though, they were able to revive this significant building and still manage to keep it relevant to women's education by redefining it to modern needs.



IMAGES BAZAAR

IS YOUR CHILD ON TRACK?

THE KEY TO RAISING CREATIVE CHILDREN IN THIS DIGITAL AGE COMES FROM FORGING A NURTURING AND SENSITIVE RELATIONSHIP WITH THEM

Children bring joy and love to our lives and there is no bond deeper than the one shared between parents and the child. But there are times when parents get stressed out, overwhelmed and exhausted from their round-the-clock parenting, because raising children in this digital, fast paced life, where they have unique temperament traits and needs, can be demanding.

STAYING TUNED IN

To meet such demands, parents have to constantly re-evaluate and reinvent themselves. As easy as it is to google all the answers for parental queries, the more difficult it becomes to implement them. Such is the irony of life. Today's children, however, seem to lack the ability to empathise, negotiate and cooperate. This can have negative consequences on their academic achievement as well as on their interpersonal

relationships. The amount of exposure our children have to smartphones and ipads makes them smarter and quicker in processing their information, but it has its negatives too. The rising trend of children who have aggression, limited attention spans and disorders pertaining to sleep and eating habits is definitely worrisome for most parents.

A BALANCING ACT

As parents, the onus lies on us to bring balance in their lives. To develop creativity and problem-solving skills, it is best to let your children have some free time to play. We often come across cases of children buckling under pressure, be it sports or studies; they want to excel because they want to prove a point to their parents, that they are good enough. So teach your children to excel but start with instilling emotional values in them. It is important to inculcate emotional well-being as well as

intellectual skills in them. Such children are better learners, they have fewer behavioural concerns and more friends, and are able to resolve conflicts better. In order to do that, show respect and adopt a two-way communication approach with them. Avoid being an instruction booklet. Express your love and give a sense of security to the child verbally in the form of appreciation and non-verbally through touch and hugs.

BUILDING A STRONG FOUNDATION

Remember a child's confidence level builds up not only from winning. It comes from a solid foundation of family love. The problem these days is that with parents being so hyper about everything and unable to strike a balance, all we see around us is an increase in depressed and anxious children. If a parent is stressed and constantly on edge, the child picks up on that mood. In my clinical

observations, I personally feel that home should be a place where children can recharge their batteries, feel safe and supported. When children have the support they need, eat right and get enough sleep, they usually have what it takes to manage any crisis. Parents who are tuned in to their children and their needs, are sensitive in providing support and love to them and a nurturing environment can help their children learn to deal effectively with stress that they confront in typical situations every day.



SEEMA HINGORANY
Clinical psychologist and
author of *Beating the Blues*,
Mumbai



IMAGES BAZAAR

10

WAYS TO BEAT DIABETES

TIPS TO HELP PREVENT AND DELAY ONSET OF THE DISEASE

The prevalence of Type 2 diabetes is exponentially increasing. Besides those who are overweight and obese, there are certain group of people who are at an increased risk of this dreaded disease and therefore may need to take extra precautions when it comes to their lifestyle and eating habits. This particular type of malady usually affects those who are genetically prone to the disorder and is found to be prevalent more in Southeast Asian countries. What we fail to realise is that it is largely preventable and can be controlled effectively through early screenings and medication to prevent or delay its onset. All you need to do is maintain a good and healthy balance. Here are some useful tips to reduce your risk factors.

1 WATCH YOUR WEIGHT

Obesity is one of the most important risk factors for developing Type 2 diabetes. Losing up to 10 per cent of your body weight will cut the risk of getting afflicted to half. You can combat this through a low-calorie and low-fat diet. It is the best way to control your weight and reduce the risk of diabetes.

2 EAT A BALANCED, HEALTHY DIET

Reduce the amount of fat in your diet, especially saturated and trans fats. Cut back on salt and focus on fruits and vegetables. Eating a variety of greens every day may cut your risk by as much as 22 per cent.

3 EXERCISE REGULARLY

Light to moderate physical activity on most days of the week helps manage weight and in controlling high blood

pressure and cholesterol levels. Ensuring 45 minutes of brisk walk every day can help you achieve your weight loss goals and cut the risk simultaneously. Exercise is also beneficial for keeping your blood sugar and insulin levels.

4 AVOID PROCESSED, FAST FOODS

These are usually high in salt, fat and calories. Research suggests that tasty chemicals in processed food called advanced glycation end-products (AGE) may trigger inflammation and oxidative stress in the body, damaging tissues and causing insulin resistance. It's best to cook food using fresh ingredients.

5 LIMIT YOUR ALCOHOL INTAKE

Too much alcohol can lead to weight gain and may also increase your blood pressure and triglyceride

WATCHING TELEVISION FOR MORE THAN 20 HOURS A WEEK UPS YOUR CHANCES OF DIABETES COMPARED TO THOSE WHO RESTRICT THEIR VIEWING TO 10 HOURS



FIVE WAYS TO KNOW YOU HAVE DIABETES

- ▶ You were healthy and suddenly you notice you are losing significant weight
- ▶ You urinate too much
- ▶ You are always thirsty
- ▶ You feel hungry despite eating
- ▶ You repeatedly get fungal infections of genitals



levels. Men should limit themselves to two standard drinks a day, while women should have no more than one in any case.

6 SEE YOUR DOCTOR FOR REGULAR CHECK-UPS

As you get older, it's a good idea to regularly check your blood glucose, blood pressure and blood cholesterol levels.

7 QUIT SMOKING

Smokers are twice as likely to develop diabetes as non-smokers.

8 CONTROL YOUR BLOOD PRESSURE

This can be easily done through regular exercise, eating a balanced diet and by maintaining weight. In some cases, medication might be needed as prescribed by the doctor.

9 CUT BACK ON TV TIME

The hours you spend watching television have a direct correlation with the risk of getting diabetes. People who watch television for more than 20 hours a week have a higher risk of

diabetes than those people who watch television for 10 hours. The reason being that people who watch television for long hours are not physically active enough and also indulge in unhealthy snacking during shows. Instead of parking yourself in front of the tube, use that time to take a walk with your spouse, practice dance moves or play with your children and grandchildren.

10 CUT OUT SUGARY DRINKS

Studies show that those who drink two or more sweet drinks a day have a 25 to 30 per cent higher risk of diabetes than their peers.



DR PRADEEP V GADGE
Chief Diabetologist, Shreya
Diabetes Care, Mumbai

RHYTHM AND REPOSE

WITH DANCE IN HER VEINS, MADHU NATARAJ IS SPREADING
THE MESSAGE OF ART AS A CATALYST FOR CHANGE

By DURBA GHOSH

Dancing for me is a memory from the womb," says dancer Madhu Nataraj, 44, as she ties the ghungroos around her ankles. Born in a family of artists, the Bangalore-based Nataraj trained in Kathak under her mother, the legendary Maya Rao and her maternal aunt, Chitra Venugopal. But the passion for dance was seared in her conscience since she was a little girl, much before she started training in Kathak formally. The music of ghungroo and the grace of movements had probably started hammering her conscience during her several trips with her mother for rehearsals and dance recitals.

"It is difficult to remember a time when dance wasn't a part of my life. Ma's presence has had a huge influence on me. I used to hold her hand and accompany her for rehearsals and shows, and that cultural environment has shaped my identity," she says. However Nataraj did not take to dancing just as naturally. Her inherent need to sculpt her own identity, one independent of her mother, distracted her from dance.

She wanted to explore new career opportunities that came her way and went on to study journalism. "I was moving away from

PHOTOGRAPH BY NILOTPAL BARUAH

Nataraj has been passionate about dance even as a child

dance for some reason. I wasn't ready to take it up as a career. My mother never forced me into it; she simply requested me one day to attend a dance recital by a famous artist. I did, and that stirred something inside me," Nataraj reminisces. "I understood that no matter what I do in life, dance will always be part of me. Interest was always there, but now, I have started devoting my time to it."

Nataraj went on to train in contemporary dance in New York, and returned to India with a vision to create a unique dance company with its own distinctive contemporary Indian dance identity. The legacy of Maya Rao, who is credited as the pioneer for revival of Kathak in India and for introducing the dance form to South India, weighed heavy on Nataraj. But with the guidance of her late mother and empowered by the exposure to western dance forms, she learnt to fuse both the worlds in an artistic bind.

Nataraj returned to India to set up the Natya STEM (Space Time Energy Movement) Dance Kampni in 1995, the contemporary dance performing troupe of the 45 year-old Natya Institute of Kathak and Choreography, Bangalore. Natya STEM started to explore and create new expressions in Indian dance. and has produced over 75 choreographic works, including short pieces and well-known productions such as Vajra.

The four-member core

team was also one of the first in Bangalore to organise a flash mob. "When we started STEM, there was no contemporary dance group in Bangalore. We were criticised for overstepping a cultural dance form like Kathak and people were wondering why an Indian classical dancer needed to stand on her head to prove a point," she recalls.

Nataraj fought the odds with conviction and soon her choreographic work of inducing western dance forms in Kathak won several accolades. She incorporates

movements from across the spectrum—jazz, folk, martial arts and yoga among others. The presentation is further enriched with collaborative music from Anil Biswas and the Dagar brothers to contemporary musicians such as Grammy-awardee Ricky Kej and Taufiq Qureshi. "Using original music for our productions is a trend my mother started in this academy. All our students here are trained and are required to identify new music, and score new music as part of the curriculum. It is a legacy we have continued and are proud of," she says.

Apart from learning Kathak, students at the academy are also required to learn martial arts. "It is not just about music or dance,

there is yoga, martial arts and much more. Our learning never ends, it continues, adding experience to one's knowledge, giving back more to the form itself," she adds.

The rigorous curriculum also encourages students to create productions based on manuscripts which have never been performed before. The neat pile of student scrapbooks with original scripts, and stage blueprints sits proudly in a corner of Nataraj's small workspace. "We work hard to give a holistic education in

in the public domain, ranging from education, social issues, creativity, and documentation," she says.

After the sudden death of her mother Maya Rao, Nataraj took over the functioning of the academy and STEM. She conceptualised "Maya-Links and Echoes" for the Sangeet Natak Akademi Festival and the Kathak Mahotsav in New Delhi, which showcased Maya Rao's earliest works; some of them being *Chaturang* and *Jhinjhoti Taraana* created in the late 50s to works from the 70s

“Our learning in dance never ends, it continues, adding experience to one’s knowledge, giving back more to the form itself”

dance to our students and they graduate from here armed with a lot of knowledge and the thirst to know more," says Nataraj.

In over 20 years, Kampni has performed in some very unusual spaces. Performing in the middle of a rain forest, or in the middle of a lake, and also in the middle of maddening Bangalore traffic, Kampini productions have always striven to be much more than a mere dance drama. Resonating Maya Rao's philosophy of art-for-change, Nataraj believes that dance, or any art cannot survive in isolation. "Any art form takes shape in a particular social, political and cultural space and it absorbs its characteristics. Therefore, art is a potent medium for change

and 80s into her swan song *Kathak Through The Ages*, which Maya Rao choreographed at the age of 86. "I have beautiful memories of Ma from my childhood days. She is my mother, teacher and my guide. So a piece to commemorate her exceptional work made complete sense," says Nataraj.

Under the tutelage of Nataraj, the Kampni has a unique repertoire; from short sequences inspired by the rare martial art forms of Kalaripayattu from Kerala and Thang Ta from Manipur; to more recent productions that celebrate the core indestructible power of a woman. And STEM's portfolio of work has found admirers all over the world.

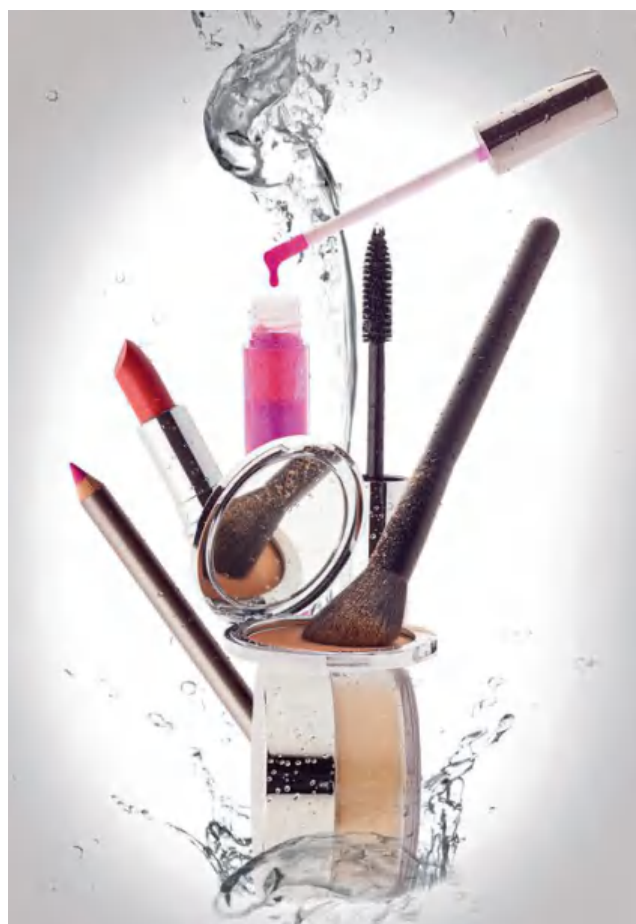
FOLLOW A ROUTINE It is important to have a regular beauty regime to have a flawless skin. Start the day with cleansing, toning, oiling and moisturising (CTOM) routine. Go for a moisturiser that has SPF already in it so that you do not have to apply your daily sun protection after you moisturise. You should choose a CTOM kit as per your skin type ranging from dry, oily to combination skin.

PRIME TIME Add a primer to your moisturiser. Cover your entire face with it and bring it down the neck to soften the appearance of the skin. It will help minimise your pores and you will not need as much foundation for your face.

FOUNDATION IS KEY

A healthy complexion at work with the right shade and texture of foundation is essential. Do not follow the dot-dot-dot rule and start by blending because by the time you get to the last dot, it is a little dry and also difficult to blend. Instead take some foundation on your hand, warm it up and then blend it in using your fingers or a sponge. Oil free, long-wear, liquid foundation and mineral make-up are not only great to hide skin flaws but also stay in place all day.

CONCEAL IT WELL Some women skip foundation and go straight to the concealer. While others do not bother with concealer if they use foundation. No matter what base you used before, concealer helps in covering broken capillaries, dark circles and blemishes. Avoid concealing the entire eye area; conceal only the dark circles.



THINKSTOCK

DIFFERENT STROKES

AVOID BEING MADE UP
AND MASTER THE ART OF
WORK MAKEUP

Get two shades of concealer—a lighter one and a darker one—and blend them together on the back of your hand with a brush to get a custom camouflage colour. Gently brush a bit of concealer onto the area where you need it and then press it in with your finger tips.

POWDER COATED Use a compact to ensure that your face does not start perspiring.

This will also help you set your foundation without leaving any residue behind.

FOR YOUR EYES ONLY Keep your eye make-up simple and fuss free. A liner can increase the volume of your lashes by tenfold. But avoid the cat-eye look and other high-graphic looks. Instead line your upper lash line by aiming for the roots of your lashes. Apply it and then smudge it

with a brush to blur the line. It is always better to change your mascara every three months so that it is fresh and does not leave your lashes dry-looking and clumpy. Go for one or two coats. Start at the base of your lashes and twist the wand a bit as you pull it up and out through the lashes. Then wipe off the wand and barely touch the bottom lashes.

LIPS SAY IT ALL Lipsticks and glosses in pastel shades of pink, peach and even warm colours such as brown are great for office wear. Not a fan of wearing lipsticks? Buy some lightly tinted lip glosses or lip balms and keep them handy for touch-ups.

BLUSH OF PINK Keep your blusher light and sparkle free for an ideal office look. The fair complexioned can choose blushers in the pink-peach family, duskier women on the other hand, are better off with warmer blush shades like coral.

COOL TOOLS By improving the quality of your brushes and using richer pigmented products, the application would be better, even without improving your technique.



DR BLOSSOM KOCHHAR
Founder & Chairperson,
Blossom Kochhar Aroma
Magic, Delhi



BREAKING THE NORM

Lounge pants paired with a long kurta is a classic combination; beat the monotony with an uneven hemline and complete the look with leather flats.

Payal Khandwala dupion silk kurta ₹16,550; sapphire lounge pants ₹5,050

Eka contoured handmade leather shoes ₹4,500

Amrapali Jewels silver glass maang tika ₹3,100

TWIST ON TRADITION

EMBRACE SIMPLICITY WITH ORGANIC FABRICS AND FREE-FLOWING SILHOUETTES;
WHEN IT COMES TO CELEBRATIONS, IT IS ABOUT BEING EFFORTLESS



REDEFINING BASICS

How can you turn your plain white shirt into a celebratory outfit? Pair it with a long printed skirt and add brogues for finesse.

KharaKapas gypsy soul organic block printed cotton skirt ₹5,500;
ivory cotton shirt ₹2,500
Forever 21 brogues ₹2,400
Mango leather belt ₹1,500
Amrapali Jewels kirti mukha pendant ₹5,100



PANTS OF PERFECTION

Dhoti-pants are all the rage this season and there's no better time than now to wear them. Don't forget the Kolhapuris though.

Rajesh Pratap glass cotton handwoven colour-blocked dhoti pants and glass cotton smoked camisole. Price on request
Fabindia Khadawa black leather chappal ₹1,190; khadi clutch ₹990

Amrapali Jewels silver neckpiece ₹7,400; bird ear cuffs ₹3,900



THE LONG AND SHORT OF IT

Midi dresses are the right mix of demure and diva. Get a plain dress minus prints, add some statement jewellery and you have got the look right.

Eka linen handloom midi dress ₹13,500

Soulier Carte Seville shoes ₹2,799

Amrapali Jewels silver neckpiece ₹7,400

Label by Ritu Kumar Gaanch bag ₹6,500

PHOTOGRAPHS **M ZHAZO**

STYLING **SRISHTI JHA**

MAKE-UP **PUNAM EKKA**

HAIR STYLING **KIRAN YADAV**

MODEL **YULIYA AT KARMA MODELS**

LOCATION COURTESY **BEYOND DESIGNS, NEW DELHI**

RUNAWAY VICTORY

AFTER A YEAR-LONG BAN, ATHLETE DUTEE CHAND IS BACK ON THE RUNNING TRACK WITH HER SIGHTS SET ON THE 2016 RIO OLYMPICS

By MONA RAMAVAT

At the far end of the sprawling Gachibowli Stadium in Hyderabad, coach Nagapuri Ramesh winds up an early morning training session with his athletes. We catch a glimpse or two of the admiring looks some of these rising stars are casting at the internationally acclaimed 19-year-old sprinter, Dutee Chand. She cracks a joke, eliciting easy laughter from one of the other girls. Undoing her shoelaces, she greets us with a child-like smile. "I'm happy, I'm back in some form," she shares, talking about her morning and evening training schedules. Recovering from the emotional and psychological stress during the time of her fight against the IAAF (International Association of Athletics Federation) regulations governing female sportspersons with hyperandrogenism, Chand is once again focusing on her training.

It was a landmark judgment for the sporting world that came about with the decision of the CAS (Court of Arbitration for Sport) to suspend the IAAF's regulations that prevent females with hyperandrogenism, or higher levels of testosterone, to compete in the female category. Chand had to forgo a year of com-

peting after the Athletics Federation of India struck her name off the list of names for the Commonwealth Games in July 2014. The reason cited was hyperandrogenism and she was banned from running. She, however, refused to undergo any surgery and chose to challenge the ban with the CAS.

In the last one year, Chand's performance fell and her confidence took a beating too. "But I didn't lose faith in the divine, which has kept me going, besides support from SAI (Sports Authority of India) and my well-wishers." It wasn't an easy journey for her, with many quick to judge and insinuations coming in plenty. Her family, who stood by her throughout the rough patch, was ecstatic when the news of the verdict came. "My mother would always tell me that I'd win. When we spoke after the news of the verdict, she said, 'didn't I always tell you?' It was her win as well as mine," she says.

"She needs caring more than coaching," says Ramesh, who has been coaching her for five years now. "I insisted that she trains at the Pullela Gopichand Academy, focusing her attention on the training." In a relaxed and uplifting environment, Chand is regaining her form rapidly. "Interacting with other winners such as Sindhu and Kashyap (ace shuttlers PV Sindhu and Parupalli



Chand is glad to be back on the racing track

PHOTOGRAPH BY KRISHNENDU HALDER

Kashyap) is good to give her a morale boost too. She looks up to Pullela Gopichand who has been encouraging her as well.”

Her recent win at the 13th Federation Cup Junior Athletics in the 200 meters race in Hyderabad is proof enough that she is finding her confidence back. Her sights are set for the Rio Olympics, though. With eight months to go, “I need to work quite a bit on myself. Since I lost a year, my performance deteriorated badly. I have decided to put the past behind me and only look forward. There are many more medals I need to win.” She was the first Indian sprinter to reach a global athletics 100 metres final when she qualified for the finals in the 2013 World Youth Championships in Ukraine and earned much acclaim.

Chand was discovered quite by chance when Ramesh, who has been a national coach for 15 years, was coaching her elder sister, Saraswati Chand in Patiala. “I saw potential in Dutee and decided to train her with the objective of helping her secure a job, eventually. Her parents are small-time cotton weavers and we wanted to help the family in whatever way that we could. But I never imagined then that she would blossom into one of the finest sprinters in India. Within three months, she broke national records. Though a junior, she became a senior Asian Championships bronze medalist in Pune in 2013. After her feat in the 2013 World Youth Championships, she marked her place as a champ.”

Chand recalls those early training days and shares amusedly, “I never knew that a sportsperson could also garner so much recognition. I always thought that this kind of adulation was meant only for film stars and singers. My Facebook page was flooded with friend requests in the thousands after the 2013 wins. It was overwhelming and also deeply humbling.”

Growing up at Gopalpur, a small village in Odisha, she would walk or run to school, “depending on how late I was,” since she didn’t have a

bicycle. Perhaps that was her earliest training in running. Her two younger sisters are inspired by her and want to grow up to be athletes as well. “Just like my inspiration has always been my sister, Saraswati. Another legend I look up to is Usha didi (PT Usha). She was very supportive towards me during the ban and a few words of encouragement from her meant a great deal.” She’s found several friends among the other athletes at the academy. “I feel at home,” she says. “Nobody bothers me here and I like the sporting culture that Gopichand bhaiyya has been promoting.”

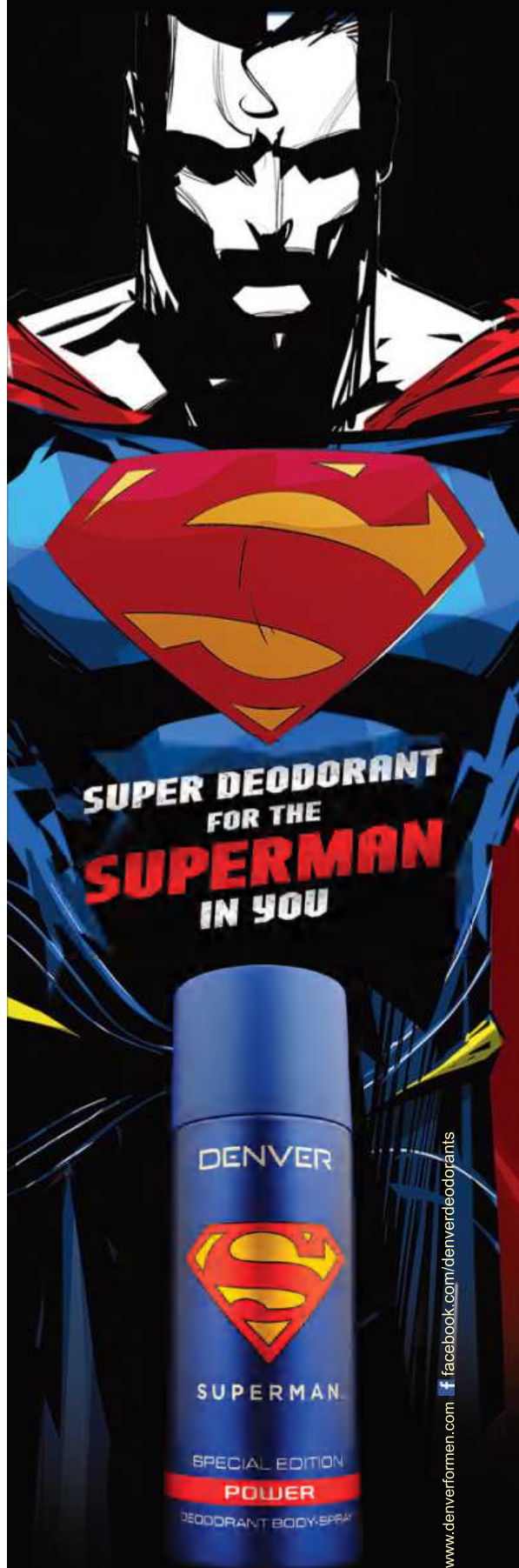
Her biggest strength is her unwavering faith in the divine. “You should see her room. It looks like a little temple,” says Ramesh. “Her

“
I have decided to
put the past behind
me and only look
forward. There are
many more medals
I need to win
for India.”

faith in her prayers is reflective of her sincerity and her strong connection with her roots.” Music is another meditation too. “I enjoy listening to Oriya songs and I am an incessant singer as well,” she smiles. “I can break into song anytime; whether I’m all by myself or even on the training track. It’s a kind of personal madness.”

It’s back to her schedule now with sessions on physiotherapy before training in the second half of the day. “We need to make the best of the time we have for training. Every hour is precious,” she says. Besides competing internationally for India, her dream is also to start a sports academy of her own to support promising athletes. As for the Olympics? “I’m doing my best.”

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THINKSTOCK

AT FIRST BLUSH

KNOW HOW TO MAKE YOUR ONLINE BOX OF GOODIES
SUIT YOUR SPECIFIC GROOMING NEEDS

Beauty subscription boxes are seriously addictive little things. Cleverly curated and smartly presented boxes arrive every month at your doorstep to delight, educate and reveal all that is latest and interesting in the world of beauty, skincare and grooming. While industry experts spend most of their time poring over trends and new discoveries in the world of beauty, how do you, as a subscriber, decide on what is the best way to build your own subscription box? It's not as difficult as you might imagine. Here a few tips on how to go about it.

THINK BUDGET

Do you have a maximum spend in mind while you build your box? If yes, then

the first thing is to start with selecting what you absolutely need. Once that is done add any interesting extras that might have appealed to your eye while browsing. I would suggest keeping your eyes open as you follow the social media feed of your favourite subscription box service, flash offers and other product offers constantly being featured. By doing so, you might just find that highlighter you've been longing for being offered at a price that suits your budget and specifications.

THINK END USE

Are you building your box in preparation for a beach holiday? Are you stocking on your monthly beauty and skincare staples? Are you looking to discover a new brand or to kickstart a new hair care regime? The best

way to build your beauty box is by thinking of the theme and selecting products accordingly.

THINK USER

If you are creating the box as a gift to give to someone else, then think of the person for whom it is meant. Does she have an active lifestyle with a lot of sun exposure? Think of skin and hair care products which repair and heal such as sulphate free shampoos and conditioners, sunscreens, skin balms and lip healers. If your gift box is for a newly married friend then after the hectic days of partying and celebration that make an Indian wedding, her skin and hair are going to need that extra bit of pampering and nourishment.

Create a mini vanity box for her to take along with

her on that much-needed honeymoon. A classic cleanser, toner and moisturiser kit along with some rejuvenating goodness infused facial sheet masks; fresh and classic make-up as well as a great perfume sampler would make for a well-thought-through gift.

THINK OUT OF THE BOX

Beauty boxes are also a great way to get out of your comfort zone and try new things. Try a new regime, experiment with a fresh make-up look, sample a new brand recommended by your subscription beauty box friends—there's a whole new world of wonderful things waiting to be discovered.



BINDU SHARMA
Co-founder, MSMBox.com,
Delhi

Decoding myths about Pilates

It is often said that Pilates is more focussed on flexibility?
How true is that?

AISHWARYA YERRA, DELHI

Pilates focuses on deeper core muscles, spinal alignment and isolation of movement with breathing and centering as the focus. Flexibility is a complete myth.

Does Pilates really work for weight loss?

ANUSUA SATPATHI, DELHI

Pilates helps indirectly with weight loss. As a controlled movement form it cannot generate the calorie usage required for weight loss, but focuses on strengthening the core muscles, gait and posture which in turn helps you to weight train and run better and maximise calorie burning.

Can Pilates make your bad back worse?

KABITA BANERJEE, MUMBAI

That can happen only if you do it without following the principles



CORBIS

of alignment, concentration and centering or do too much too soon. Otherwise it strengthens the back.

Is it safe to practice Pilates during pregnancy? Any special care one needs to take?

SANJANA MUKHERJEE, KOLKATA

Pilates is in fact recommended during pregnancy because it strengthens the deep core muscles that help with troublefree labour as well as a quicker recovery post-delivery. But it is best to start Pilates before pregnancy and always check with the doctor.

Is Pilates a derivative of yoga or is that just a myth?

SUDHA SHARMA, DELHI

Yes, to a certain extent it is. Joseph Pilates, founder of the Pilates method combined yoga, taichi and martial arts to create this most popular fitness system.

Are there special equipments one needs to practice Pilates?

ESHNA GOENKA, MUMBAI

Matwork is the primary way to do Pilates. The reformer, cadillac, spine corrector, and wunda chair are used for advanced movements and for more variations.



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Madhuri Ruia
Nutritionist and
Pilates expert,
Mumbai

THAT KIND

— OF —



SENIORITA



FASHION IS
COMFORT

“I WOULD LOVE TO DO A HEIST FILM”

By SHELLY ANAND

Born and raised in the US, 24-year-old Devika Bhise dons many hats. Traipsing between dance, music and acting, she played a small part in producer Griffin Dunne's romantic comedy *The Accidental Husband* early in her career. It is her recent film *The Man Who Knew Infinity* by director Matt Brown that has brought her into the limelight. Based on Indian mathematician, Srinivasa Ramanujan, has Bhise playing the role of the renowned mathematician's wife Janaki. The film which premiered at the Toronto International Film Festival recently has Dev Patel of *Slumdog Millionaire* fame alongside English actors Jeremy Irons and Toby Jones. Trained in Bharatnatyam under her mother Swati Bhise and her guru Sonal Mansingh, Bhise went to Johns Hopkins University, US, to study art history and theatre.

WILDEST DREAM

Being able to act for a living seems pretty wild but it seems to be coming true

DREAM ROLE

I want to do a heist film. Like *Ocean's Eleven*, or *The Italian Job*. It would be fun and a nice change from the

dramatic, emotionally draining roles I have done.

WORKING WITH ACTOR JEREMY IRONS

Humbling. He is down-to-earth and such a gentleman; it demonstrates a certain class and grace that not many celebrities have in this day and age. I will always use my experience of working with him to remind myself that a little humility goes a long way.

FAVOURITE ACTOR AND DIRECTOR

Woody Allen for directors. He is hilarious and incredibly talented. As for actors, I absolutely love English actor Emily Blunt and Canadian actor Rachel McAdams. Highly versatile, they bring depth and warmth to their characters that make them such a pleasure to watch.

PROUDEST MEMORY

Convincing the makers of *The Man Who Knew Infinity* that I was an Indian and could pull off the role. They saw me as an American because of my accent and my ethnically ambiguous face.

LAST BOOK YOU READ

Room by Irish Canadian author Emma Donoghue. It is a very fast and entertaining read, albeit disturbing, and I highly recommend it.



PHOTOGRAPH BY GUZMAN

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COVER STORY

A Green Diwali **s-4**
Five entrepreneurs show you how festivities can be fun and ecologically friendly at the same time.

BUZZ

Into the city **s-10**
Find out what to do, what to shop for and where to eat.

Cover photo by SUMANTH KUMAR; Model LAKSHMI DEVI; Stylist SRUTHI KANNATH;
Hair and make-up VIJI; Location VIVANTA BY TAJ CONNEMARA, CHENNAI

OUR PICK of the month

Double Avatar

November 15

Crazy Mohan presents his brand new comedy, 'Google Gadothgajan'. He has been downloaded from the internet and comes down to earth to help Madhu Balaji get married to his sweetheart. Set to the modern times, the play has Crazy Mohan essaying double roles as Chocolate Krishna and Google Gadothgajan. Tickets at bookmyshow.com

Time 4:30pm
At Vani Mahal, 103,
GN Road, T Nagar
Tel 2815 2166



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**GET DRUNK
TO DETOX, P43**



GAURAVARORA
"When I started, I had no
confidence, no friends, no
girlfriend" P54

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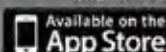
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TWIST TO TR

By SARANYA CHAKRAPANI

GIVING BACK

JEAN FRANCOIS SEBILLE,
60

THIS DIWALI, A SMALL initiative on your part to opt for a healthier and more fragrant celebration will go a long way. Jean Francois Sebille, the Frenchman and Aurovillian who started the Naturally Auroville Boutique in Chennai in 1999, conveys this message with probably more conviction than anyone else in the business. His wellness products, from candles and incenses to diffusers, are rooted in Auroville's founding philosophy of sustainable communities selling products that are not just ecologically ethical, but produced by craftspeople in a well-knit, organic system. The township employs more than 2,000 people working under about 250 units, creating various arts and crafts. "All our products are organically sourced from nature.

While all our incense sticks and cones are hand-mixed, many of them are still hand-rolled by these communities," says Sebille. Choose from Naturally Auroville's range of palm wax candles that come encased in terracotta *diyas*, and are flavoured with the best of nature's essential oils. "We want to let people know that a celebratory spirit is also about respecting nature and the resources available to us," says Sebille. This season, he's stacked up organic dry-fruit *laddus*, chocolate brownies and naturally prepared jams to help you relish the spirit of an eco-friendly Diwali.

❁ PRICE Rs 175 onwards

❁ AT Khader Nawaz Khan Road,



Photograph by JAISON G

ADDITION

THESE FIVE ENTREPRENEURS, GUIDED BY THE PRINCIPLE OF SUSTAINABLE LIVING, SHOW US ECOLOGICAL ALTERNATIVES FOR A GREEN DIWALI



Jean Francois Sebille, owner,
Naturally Auroville Boutique

Sruti Harihara
Subramanian,
owner, Goli Soda



Photograph by JAISON G

TREASURE IN TRASH

SRUTI HARIHARA
SUBRAMANIAN

SRUTI HARIHARA Subramanian gives you the funk you expect in your jewellery, the art you'd like to wear on your flip-flops and the kitsch you fancy on your wall clock. Amidst those who cry 'recycled and organic', Subramanian prefers a relatively new and more efficient mantra—up-cycled.

"I realised that taking your own shopping bag to the supermarket or wearing natural fabrics was not enough to go green. Recycling involves a lot of energy to break down a product and change its consistency. The process isn't exactly eco-friendly," says Subramanian. She says and adds, "Up-cycling on the other hand is changing the purpose of a peg bottle or car tyre, giving it a new identity and delaying its journey to the dump yard."

Her store, Goli Soda was started on

this note over three years ago, after she found herself scouting for a range of alternatives that were easy on the environment. She also realised the impression of dull and boring that invariably tagged with anything organic and decided it had to change. Her products not only prevent further harm to the environment, but also make for delightful gifts—wine bottles turned into clear vases, peg bottles giving way to earrings and bracelets, candle holders made out of whisky bottles and jewellery made out of natural seeds.

Goli Soda's Diwali special also features a fun range of cloth crackers, torans and stationery made out of industrial textile waste.

❖ PRICE Rs 30 to Rs 2,000

❖ AT S-33, Fifth Avenue, Besant Nagar

❖ TEL 42699026

ORGANIC
BY THE BOOKMEERA MARAN,
44

ARCHITECT AND JEWELLERY designer Meera Maran mulled over the goodness of organic produce and naturally finished dishes a decade ago, when her five year-old daughter had to go gluten, sugar and milk-free owing to a bad skin reaction. This led Maran to explore new recipes that would fit within her daughter's dietary constraints.

"We plunged into unrefined, unprocessed and organic food and saw all of us become healthier in the process. And on the other side, we began catering special, grain-free lunches and millet-based meals. With my architectural colleagues pitching in as well, a strange mix of a design office cum catering kitchen

emerged," recalls Maran.

This eventually led to her setting up her store, Terra Earthfood, about three years ago. "Our initial range of products were planned to replace conventional snacks—which is where most people are unable to find a mindful option," she says.

In keeping with Terra's food philosophy of using unrefined, unprocessed, unpolished, unbleached, unsulphered and organically-grown ingredients to create mindful snacking options, this Diwali, Maran has reinterpreted the traditional and reinvented the old.

For vegans with a sweet tooth, Terra offers vegan beetroot *kathlis* that colour trayfulls in shocking pink and are pure decadence. Made with organic beetroots, cashews and palm sugar, there's no better way to indulge in your sweet cravings without feeling an ounce of guilt. "We never use white sugar or artificial colours in our sweets. Even our savouries are made from organically grown unpolished millets, lentils and grains, organic spices, maida-free asafoetida, cold pressed unrefined oil and Himalayan salt," says Maran.

✿ **PRICE** Rs 140 onwards

✿ **AT** 10 and 11, Singaravelan Salai, Chinna Neelangarai ✿ **TEL** 9940638931

Meera Maran,
owner, Terra Earthfood



FOR
KEEPSAKEMITAL
SURENDIRA,
37Mital Surendira,
owner, Sanskruti

DIWALI IS A SEASON OF gifting sprees, splurging on catchy packaging and long, extravagant *poojas*. Helping you keep pace with the festivities with an ecologically responsible spirit is Mital Surendira of Sanskruti, which stores theme-based gift *thalis*, personalised invitations and intricate gift and jewellery boxes made out of natural products.

Surendira started Sanskruti almost 14 years ago to conceptualise gifting and packaging solutions. But more importantly, her idea was to increase the purpose and durability of these products to last a lifetime and possibly be passed down from generation to generation. "Take, for example, a beautifully crafted spice box or cradle. These don't just make for great gifts, but can be kept as your own for years to come," she says. This season, she's making the most exquisite spice and dry

fruit boxes, coin pouches, and bread and sweet baskets out of woven palm leaf. "Women self-help groups in Tamil Nadu and the North East make us *pat-tis*, which we then infuse with zari, brocade and pearls to use as edgings for trays and saree covers," says Surendira. For organic gifts this festive season, go for palm leaf baskets with potpourri, sea salt, natural essential oils; jute baskets with organic jaggery and terracotta diya; and brown board baskets with organic *burra* sugar and terracotta *diyas*. Her jute pouches and drawstring bags are aesthetically lined with silk from inside and woven with golden zari from outside to make them classy holders of chocolates, jewellery and snacks.

❖ PRICE Rs 100 onwards

❖ AT Old no 14, new no 15, Sulaiman Zackaria Avenue, Casa Major Road, Third Lane, Egmore

❖ TEL 28194489

Photograph by JAISON G



Suresh Lakshmiopathy,
Coordinator, Tula

FASHION FORWARD

SURESH
LAKSHMIPATHY,
47

SUSTAINABILITY MAY be a challenge to any eco-friendly label around the world, but Suresh Lakshmiopathy of Tula insists that “real eco-clothing—one that sticks to its essence, right from the cotton seeds used to the last button stitched onto the garment—reaps more than is sowed.”

Four years ago, Lakshmiopathy and a few other like-minded friends looked for solutions to address cotton farmer suicides. “We started with 15 farmers in Madurai, with a lakh of rupees as capital for each. We gave them native, non GMO seeds and went through a value chain of employing resources to hand spin, manually tailor and naturally dye the garment,” he says.

They have already empowered about 100 livelihoods with the initial investment—15 weavers, 15 farmers, 45 spinners and about 10 to 20 tailors. He adds, “We deliberately take our produce to the local market. Even our buttons are made out of coconut shells, which are biodegradable.”

So this Diwali, pick from their earthy salwars, palazzo pants, unisex shirts, scarves and tunics. The garments sport exquisite hand embroidery by Karnataka’s Lambadi tribes, beautiful Kalamkari and block prints. And above all, they’re a style statement that is as much about giving back as about what’s in.

✿ PRICE Rs 700 onwards

✿ AT Basera, Besant Avenue Road, Arunachalapuram, Adyar

✿ TEL 9444351968

Photograph by JAISON G



6

THINGS
TO LOOK
FORWARD
TO



1

FESTIVE COUTURE

Till November 11

This Diwali, Evoluzione brings you irresistible offers to choose from. On display are pop up shows from designers such as Amrita Thakur, Divya Gupta and Studio Verandah, and festive classics from Anamika Khanna, Anju Modi, Nachiket Barve, Rohit Bal and Sabyasachi.

Price Rs 6000 onwards

At Evoluzione, No 3, Khader Nawaz Khan Road

Tel 28333627

THAI PLATTERS

With several Thai classics being served up around the city, we're now familiar with the fresh, complex flavours coupled with the innate simplicity of the cuisine. Yet still, there's a fair dose of novelty that Absolute Thai, the new restaurant by Foodies Kitchen, brings to your dining experience.

As with Thailand's no-nonsense culinary forte, the restaurant is done up in simple elegance, with clearly not much splurged wastefully on an extravagant décor.

Thai alphabets are etched out on wooden panels and allow light to stream through in lovely patterns, a fragrant setting almost reminds you of a placid poolside spa and the food keeps the high going.

Ehjas Sultan, co-partner of the restaurant, tells us that their idea was to serve up simple, uncomplicated Thai food without meddling with the flavours. As a result, you'll find the classics such as Pad Thai and the famous green curry prepared like they should be, and signature dishes, though innovative, with their flavour fundamentals in place.

You're greeted with shots of a lemon ginger welcome drink (that's truly addictive) and the delicious Mieng Kham (Thailand's popular wrapped leaf snack).

We tried the Khoa Pod Tod Namprikpow (baby corn tossed with roasted chilli paste and served in rice tartlets) and Goong Sabainang (deep-fried prawns wrapped in wonton skin), which gave us enough texture and interplay of flavours to keep wanting more.

The Tod Mun Pla (Thai fish cakes), which came next, failed on the mince, which though pre-done for technical reasons, gave away instantly in a hard patty.

We recommend signature dishes such as the Tom Yum Talay, which serves four, the Pla Neung Manao—which keeps the fish whole even after fillet—and the Tub Tim Grob, water chestnuts in coconut milk, which is just sublime.

Meal for two Rs 1,200

At No 24, Cenotaph Road, Teynampet

Tel 30205518

■ **By Saranya Chakrapani**

3 CLASSIC RECREATED

November 20 to 22

The Madras Players in collaboration with Crea-Shakthi present on stage Alfred Hitchcock's *Rope*, a 1948 American film based on a play of the same name by Patrick Hamilton. It revolves around a dinner party that two young men throw after killing their classmate and hiding his body in their apartment.

Tickets bookmyshow.com **At** Museum Theatre, No 406, Pantheon Road, Egmore **Tel** 28193778 **Timings** 7.15 p.m.



2 SWEET TOOTH

Till November 11

Park Hyatt brings you an elegant repertoire of Diwali delights in an assortment of Indian sweets and western delicacies including melt-in-the-mouth *kaju katlis*, *soan papdis* macarons and white chocolate.

Price Rs 700 onwards

At 39, Velachery Bypass Road **Tel** 71771234



4 SING ALONG

November 13

Pop sensation Haricharan treats you to an evening of his greatest hits at Vaanga Makka Vaanga, a musical extravaganza organised by the Rotary Club of Madras Golden City.

Tickets bookmyshow.com

At Music Academy, New no 168 (Old no 306), TTK Road **Tel** 28112231 **Timings** 6.30 p.m.



NEWINTOWN / BEYOND MADRAS

A NATIVE FARE

If you have for years missed out on the experience of tasting the rich, homemade flavours from your grandmother's kitchen, the latest from Park Hyatt—Beyond Madras at The Dining Room—can make up for it all. Executive Sous Chef Balaji Natarajan spills out on this menu the secrets kept alive and flourished by family matriarchs. He puts out a spread that's intriguing and almost impossible to resist, with dishes such as Kothamalli Kozhi—slow braised chicken with fresh coriander and chilli paste tempered with dry coriander seeds and Mocha Masala—field beans cooked in fennel, coconut and garlic gravy finished with kari masala powder. Topping the list are delicacies from the sherbet stall, particularly the Nannari Sherbet, made out of herbal root and fresh lemon and the melt-in-the-mouth filter coffee ice-cream.

Meal for two Rs 2,700

At Park Hyatt, 39, Velachery Road, Velachery **Tel** 71771277

■ **By Saranya Chakrapani**

5 COLLECTIVE LANGUAGE

Till November 25

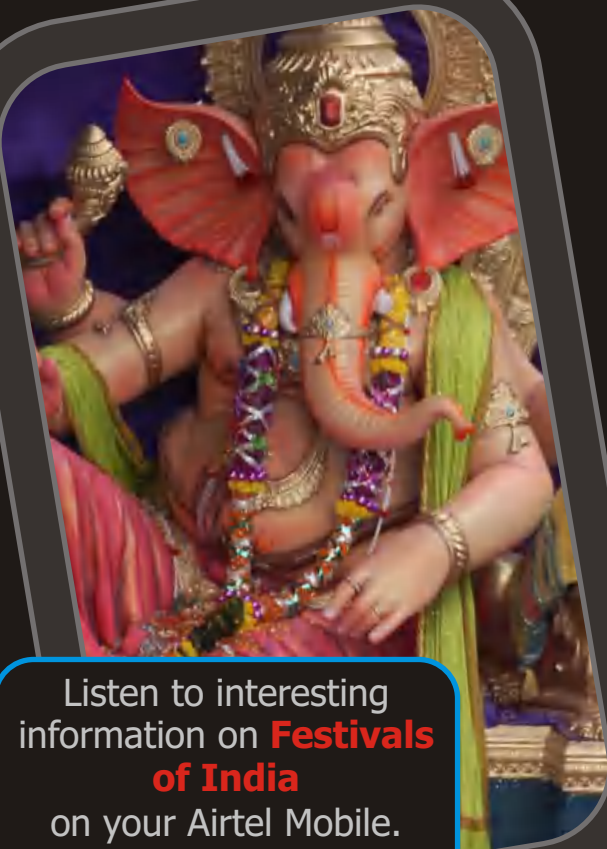
Apparao Galleries present 'Politics of Religion and Religion of Politics', an exhibition that illustrates the forces behind the artists' creative motivation. **At** 7, Wallace Gardens, 3rd street, Nungambakkam **Tel** 28332226

6 JUST BAG IT

Language presents Collezioni Language, a brand that transcends contemporary styles fused with high street fashion elements. Crafted with value and elegance, it targets the savoir-faire and sophisticated urban professional. The collection features handcrafted leather bags for men and women, belts, wallets, hold-alls and totes.

Price Rs 3,000 onwards **At** No 17, Rutland Gate, Nungambakkam **Tel** 32210400

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CELEBRATE THE RIGHT TO LIFE

Religious and urban arrogance is turning us into a massive mob for whom, science and civic sense are nullified

A raging debate on fireworks seems a lot more explosive than the actual fireworks themselves. As always, most of us take the emotional stand and let logic take a back seat. The fear of curtailing religious freedom, the impact of such a ban on the industry and a false belief that festivities would lose their sheen—these thought patterns compel us to go on and pollute on a massive scale every year.

In the modern age in packed megalopolises, the scale of pollution is sky high, primarily owing to such societal ignorance. Despite breathing in thick polluted air and drinking treated water, we fail to understand that environment compliability is a compulsion that has risen for our common good. Education seems to have made no difference in many of our cases, why else would it be so hard for us to comprehend that we cannot breathe in sulfur dioxide and drink water containing heavy metals?

The large-scale campaigns that take place to reduce and eventually abolish fireworks for mass celebrations, are not against any particular religion. Neither is it 'anti-anybody'. What it is, is pro-environment. This needs to be first acknowledged and understood. The positives of this campaign are largely lost in our daily chaos and the lack of a calm, tolerant outlook towards this issue.

Those who buy these fireworks year after year in fancy stalls across India, need to be filled in on the plight of the workers in Sivakasi, Tamil Nadu. The case being made is that a 400,000-strong direct employment system would be lost if there were to be a ban on fireworks.

However, little is being spoken about the working conditions of these people or the number of fatalities that take place year-on-year, in the process of manufacturing fireworks. For years, modern age slavery has been reported from these manufacturing units. These factors are conveniently ignored, because the consumer in us is excited about pyrotechnics.

High levels of air pollution are recorded across India post Diwali. Fireworks produce smoke and dust that contain various heavy metals, sulphur-coal compounds and other noxious chemicals. Poisonous and radioactive compounds such as Barium are used to produce the brilliant green in firework displays. Copper compounds are used to produce the green and blue colors,

even though they are known to contain dioxin, which has been linked to cancer. Cadmium, lithium, antimony, rubidium, strontium, lead and potassium nitrate are also commonly used to produce different effects in fireworks, even though they can cause a host of respiratory and other health problems. This explains why respiratory and neurological discomforts are common around fireworks-based celebrations.

The effects of the incessant loud noise produced by these fireworks on animals is appalling, considering stray canines and felines pick up seven times more noise than we do. Our celebrations make life a living hell for these animals. Severely traumatised by the heavy pounding, cases of loose motions and neuro attacks are common amongst pets.

The chemical residue from the outburst leaves a mark on the atmosphere, which could steadily return to the ground below as acid rain. The accumulation of strewn paper bits with glitter and heavy metal contaminants is a common site post celebration. The run-off from streets with these heavy metals into our freshwater bodies is a cause of worry, as this certainly poisons our drinking sources.

Diwali is celebrated on the plank of good over evil. In the modern age, we need to decide whether to be good or evil; whether to be driven by shallow impulse or prudence. We need to win over the evils of slavery, pollution and unhealthy practices. The broader perspective of a cleaner environment and concern for all life forms needs to be prioritised.

We as a society should migrate towards cleaner and greener celebration of our festivities, alternative skill development and employment for those working in the fireworks industry, largescale public awareness on a positive note, to drive home the message of environment conservation. It is imperative that we drive away the negative tone and work collectively towards conserving what is left. Policymakers, judiciary and the civil society need to work in tandem towards this common goal. It is not about making that noise, it's about proving a point.

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